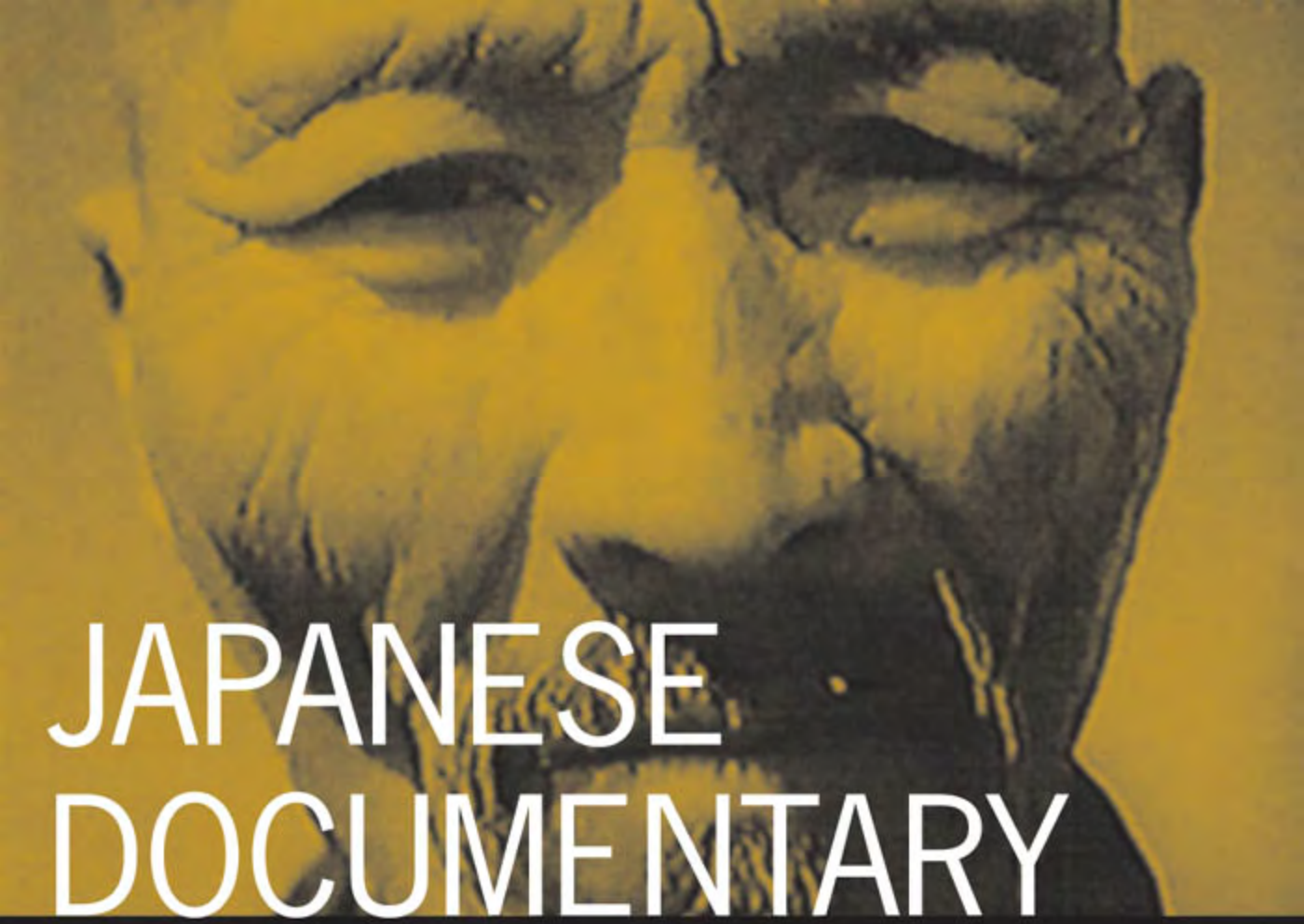


JAPANESE DOCUMENTARY FILM

THE MEIJI ERA THROUGH HIROSHIMA

Abé Mark Nornes

Japanese Documentary Film

VISIBLE EVIDENCE

Edited by Michael Renov, Faye Ginsburg, and Jane Gaines

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VISIBLE EVIDENCE, VOLUME 15

Japanese Documentary Film

The Meiji Era through Hiroshima

Abé Mark Nornes



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For my parents,
Hod and Son

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Note on Japanese Words and Names

I have preserved Japanese name order, which puts the family name first (as in Kurosawa Akira). A few figures are famous personalities who are commonly referred to by their given names only: [Terada] Torahiko or [Hayashi] Chōjirō, for example.

Transliteration follows the modified Hepburn style, with macrons for long vowels except for *ii*. Macrons are not used here in commonly known Japanese words (such as Tokyo and Toho).

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Acknowledgments

This book has had a long history, starting with my encounter with the documentary filmmaker Ogawa Shinsuke in the 1980s. I first would like to thank the late Ogawa Shinsuke and all the members of Ogawa Productions (especially Fuseya Hiroo) for bringing me to Japan and for providing me with a springboard into the world of Japanese documentary film. One of Ogawa's original motives for this support was his hope that I would learn about Japanese documentary and pass this knowledge on to the world. Unfortunately, he could not live to see this project in its final form.

The book's first incarnation was in the form of a dissertation, and I am grateful to the members of my committee (Michael Renov, Marsha Kinder, and Gordon Berger), who shepherded me through this endeavor. I have always been struck by how our interests coincide, making my study under them continually enriching. Professor Berger guided me through Japanese history, helping me to "locate" Japanese documentary in the bigger picture. It is difficult to gauge the impact Professor Kinder, my first teacher at the University of Southern California, has had on my thinking about cinema; however, I am particularly indebted to her approaches to the study of national cinemas. Finally, although I have been fascinated by documentary since high school, I never realized its true richness until I explored its furthest reaches with Professor Renov. A little of each of these teachers may be found throughout these pages. I find their support and their own scholarship continually challenging and inspiring.

Since passing through the Ogawa Productions gate, I have had the opportunity to meet many people in Japan who have supported and informed my research. Satō Tadao sat with me at the beginning and discussed directions for me to explore; I still have the scrap of paper on which he scratched the names forming the skeletal backbone of my dissertation. I also thank Satō for his own lively histories of filmmaking and criticism,

and his unfailing commitment to documentary. He has provided me with many road maps that have helped me make sense of the prewar terrain. I would also like to thank several people for sharing their thoughts and encouragement over the years: Kogawa Tetsuo, Yomota Inuhiko, Komatsu Hiroshi, Yamane Sadao, Ishizaka Kenji, Shimizu Akira, Ikui Eikō, and Tanikawa Yoshio. Tsurumi Shunsuke, Yanagisawa Hisao, Yasui Yoshio, Kageyama Satoshi, and Erikawa Ken always enriched my study junkets to Kansai. I particularly thank Ueno Toshiya, who helped me think through many of the tough parts; his energy is always infectious and encouraging. Thanks also to Hara Kazuo, Suzuki Shirōyasu, Watabe Minoru, Tomita Mikiko, Murayama Kyōichirō, Iwamoto Kenji, Koga Futoshi, Satō Makoto, and Iizuka Toshio for their discussions about Japanese documentary over the years. Back in the United States, the manuscript was shaped by readings by Yoshikuni Igarashi, Bill Paul, David Desser, and Leslie Pincus. Generous research support for the final writing came from the University of Michigan and its Center for Japanese Studies.

As the reader will discover in these pages, my work could not be accomplished without the generosity and vast knowledge of the curators at archives around the world. Ōba Masatoshi, Okajima Hisashi, and especially Saiki Tomonori helped me see and study some of the most unusual and important films at the National Film Center of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo. I was able to see other films through the help of Tachiki Shōichirō when he was at the Kawasaki City Museum, Bill Murphy of the U.S. National Archives, and documentary filmmaker Nose Kyō. Finally, I saw other important works thanks to Yasui Yoshio and the Planet Film Library in Osaka; his help gathering documentation was also invaluable. Yasui's historical retrospectives of Japanese documentary, curated for each and every Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, have been crucial for providing precious access to the whole of Japanese documentary cinema. His programming has helped keep the memory of these films fresh for filmmakers and critics of every period and has introduced dozens of key films to younger historians like me. The catalogs he has produced for these events are incredibly valuable reference materials. Finally, I am indebted to Erik Barnouw and Daniel McGovern for sharing materials from their personal collections regarding *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.*

It is likely that my work would not have been possible without the activities of the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival and the programming I have been able to do there. This festival has an international competition for the newest work and also provides a forum for combining scholarly and popular approaches to film programming and a commitment

to exploring the history of documentary. In addition to Yasui's programs, the festival has produced many other important retrospectives, the *Documentary Box* newsletter (which is also on-line), and a number of hefty exhibition catalogs. Thanks to my director and friend, Yano Kazuyuki, and the city of Yamagata and its citizens, I have had the opportunity to treat film programming as a laboratory situation for learning and thinking about Japanese documentary. My festival colleagues in Tokyo over the years—particularly Ono Seiko, Darrell William Davis, and A. A. Gerow—have enriched these experiences through hellish deadlines and countless conversations about our respective research programs and the latest movies over late-night bowls of *ramen*. Their friendship has been a source of strength, not to mention pure pleasure. I am particularly indebted to my partner in crime at Yamagata, Fukushima Yukio, who discovered this history with me. Our push and pull over the structure and approach of our events—through constant movie viewing, *kissaten* discussions, and trips to Kabuki-za—decisively shaped my own understanding of Japanese documentary. In many ways, this is as much his work as mine.

The base of knowledge provided by my work with Yamagata was decisively shaped by yet another encounter with a Japanese documentary filmmaker, Makino Mamoru, who generously opened his massive collection of Japanese film documentation and shared his own writing. Our interests and passions coincide in many areas, especially in the history of the documentary. His historiographic articles helped me navigate through decades of theory and criticism, and his reprints of key periodicals have provided all of us with easy access to prewar film criticism. Makino's support went far deeper than this, however: once a week I was privileged to sit at his living room table, where many other documentary filmmakers and critics had sat before me, while Makino rummaged around in his amazing Fibber McGee–like closets. He would emerge with one-of-a-kind documents and entire runs of obscure film journals from the first fifty years of cinema. Surrounded by stacks of these precious gems, Makino and I would sit down together to discuss what was going on between the lines of each publication. Between dives into these materials, I always enjoyed sharing ideas and stories over his big bowls of *somen*. Those closets never stopped yielding the most amazing things; had I tried to exhaust their riches, I might never have finished this book.

I would also like to thank my family. My parents' unflagging confidence was always inspiring, and all the heady dinner conversations in my youth instilled a curiosity about the world that led me to documentary in the first place, not to mention ever more schooling. Hideko's endless energy and support made the unlikely seem possible, the dream necessity, and

as I added the final touches to this manuscript, Fumiya kept the world a bright and sunny place.

A Note on Print Sources

One of the greatest obstacles for those of us studying marginalized cinemas such as the documentary is access to archives. My work at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival enabled me to gain access to films simply by programming them. Film archives in Japan are perennially underfunded, and access seems to be the first thing that gets cut to save money. The largest collection of Japanese documentaries is probably at Japan's National Film Center, but that is also the most difficult archive to use. Other large collections include those located in the U.S. Library of Congress and the U.S. National Archives. The Kawasaki City Museum has a small collection of prints and a wide variety of wartime documentaries available for viewing on video. For addresses and contact information regarding these collections, see the index to my coedited volume *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts* (New York: Harwood, 1994), which provides information on sources of prints for most of the films discussed in this book.

Luckily, the series of commemorative events marking various World War II anniversaries in the 1990s provided opportunities for several companies to release the most famous films on video, including those of Kamei Fumio. Some of these videos may be purchased through the internet via Disc Station (www.discstation.co.jp) and Tsutaya (www.tsutaya.co.jp). Researchers in Japan may also try contacting the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, which keeps reference copies of many historically important documentaries on hand.

Introduction

I came to write about Japanese documentary through a somewhat unusual route. Most historians dig into a segment of history with some sense of where they are and what they will find. They come to their subjects as scholars writing works of history. My approach has been far more roundabout. My introduction to the subject came when I was asked to coprogram, with Fukushima Yukio, a retrospective called "Nichi-Bei Eigasen" (Japan/America film wars) for the 1991 Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival. This event examined American and Japanese World War II–era documentaries covering the same themes or subject matter. We showed an American film and a Japanese film on a given subject back-to-back, in a dialogical manner, so that the films implicitly commented on each other. In this manner, we explored the war cinema and the culture in both countries by comparing them with each other. The contrasts and connections that spontaneously emerged from these back-to-back screenings also taught us lessons for today's televised version of the war film (our first research screenings at the U.S. National Archives in Washington, D.C., happened to coincide with the start of the Gulf War).

I had already studied the American war documentary and seen most of the major American films; the Japanese side, by way of contrast, was new territory. English-language materials had little to say on the matter. The standard histories by Barnouw and Barsam devote only a page or two, and both rely heavily on the observations of Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie.[1] The latter's less-than-glowing assessment argues that Japanese documentary was "influenced more by German *kulturfilme* than by the British school of documentary. There was a pseudo-scientific, pseudo-artistic approach which occasionally invalidated the subject and which one still sees in many contemporary Japanese documentaries."[2] Reading such scathing criticism, we worried that the Japanese side would pale in

comparison with the American war documentary, leaving us with a lopsided program. We began reading Japanese histories, paging through old Japanese periodicals, and finally started seeing the extant films themselves in regular trips to the National Film Center of Japan. Although the majority of the films may have confirmed Anderson and Richie's assessment, many were quite good, even powerful. We were pleasantly surprised at the depth of the history into which we had plunged blindly. Its complexity meant that our attempts to research it did not exhaust the possibilities for new, fascinating, and important areas of study. Although these efforts resulted in a book, we did not necessarily approach our work as scholars.[3] We were film programmers, so our relationship to the films did not develop in the relatively solitary space between history and writing. This was a different style of history that involved screenings, reading, and constant discussions—between partners on how to structure a meaningful event, between audience members at festival screenings and discussion sessions, and among Japanese film historians ever since, as the event achieved some lasting notoriety in the Japanese film world. My experience of the films is inseparable from this involved process, and is in some sense the sum of those relationships.

For example, two of the Japanese documentaries that left lasting impressions on me are *Nippon News No. 177* (Nippon nyūsu #177; 1943) and *The Flying Virgin* (Tonde iru shojo; 1935). We programmed the former, a military spectacle recording the ceremony for thousands of students being sent to the front, for the 1991 World War II event at Yamagata. This history came very much alive after the screening, when documentary filmmaker Yanagisawa Hisao approached me and tearfully thanked me for selecting the film. He had never seen it, but his brother was among the students in the film. Yanagisawa peered into the grain of the images in a fruitless attempt to get one last glimpse of his brother, who had never returned from the front. For a cinema centenary event in 1995, we showed *The Flying Virgin*. This precious, long-lost film was a leftist experimental documentary directed by Nose Katsuo in the 1930s. Nose's films were in the closet of his son, Kyō, who is a documentary filmmaker in his own right. At the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival he introduced the films by showing the audience his father's tiny camera and reminiscing about what historians now call the reception context. As a child, Nose Kyō had been in charge of the music at his father's screenings. For the 1995 screening, Nose prepared a sound track using the same jazz 78s he had played at screenings nearly sixty years before.

These kinds of experiences were the departure point for my primary research. Over the years, I have used my work at film events to research

other aspects of the Japanese documentary, and, to my pleasant surprise, I still stumble across incidents, films, and debates that beckon me to take a closer look. I have also discovered that there are two enthusiastic audiences hungry for information about Japanese documentary. One comes from film studies and the other from Japan area studies. Writing for such disparate readerships has posed numerous challenges, given that film scholars are often oblivious to what may be obvious to Japanese studies scholars (and vice versa). Forgive me if in the following pages I occasionally explain some things that may appear to be self-evident.

In a thumbnail sketch, this book centers on the first fifty years of documentary in Japan. The first films were, of course, actualities shot by visiting foreign cameramen. In the early decades of the twentieth century, as in much of the world, the nonfiction film had yet to appear in Japan in the form we associate with the "documentary" of Flaherty. However, as we will soon see, this by no means should be taken to imply that nonfiction cinema initially lacked complexity. In the first half of this period, most nonfiction films in Japan were sporadically produced variations of the newsreel. Around the pivot of 1930, a vigorous left-wing film movement is often identified as the start of Japanese documentary proper. Ironically, it was the first and last time Japanese documentary had an impact on the development of the nonfiction form outside Japan's borders; although it has now been largely forgotten, news of Prokino inspired similar movements in the United States, Korea, Britain, Shanghai, and Germany.[4] As Prokino was being crushed under police pressure, the first full-length documentaries were produced, most associated with one branch or another of the military. The 1930s documentary developed amid the growing war culture leading up to World War II. Although few filmmakers dared contest the world as presented in the mainstream war documentaries, the ones who did created some of the most impressive films in the history of world documentary—even if few people have been fortunate enough to see them.

Given that cinema is such a capital-intensive and collaborative form of art, it should not be surprising that filmmakers rarely struggled against the trend of militarization. However, those thinking about the nonfiction form in cinema left writing that did not necessarily reflect the official line. Sorting through these writings is one of the challenges in the pages ahead. In any case, one cannot fail to be impressed by the position documentary achieved in this period, starting with the government's concerted effort to destroy the proletarian film movement—a kind of backhanded compliment revealing the seriousness with which it was taken—and progressing to the unqualified prestige afforded nonfiction cinema after the 1937 China Incident. In 1939 one famous cultural critic, Kamei Katsuichirō, wrote that

if he were to start a film school, Lesson 1 would be documentary film.[5] In fact, production of a documentary was the first task of new hires at one major film studio. Documentary has rarely enjoyed such a position of visibility and support anywhere, anytime. When the country bogged down in the Pacific War, film production slowed as raw materials became scarce. The government increasingly controlled cinema through regulation and the consolidation of the industry into a few easily managed companies. The end of the war produced few documentaries, but with surrender the cinema was quickly called back into the service of the state, this time for the "democratization" of its citizens.

This is as much about the story of how people *thought* about documentary film as the story of documentary film—of what was made and when and by whom. Most histories of the Japanese cinema concentrate on textual analysis and auteur study to the exclusion of all else. This is generally true of most writing on Asian cinema, where little attention has been paid to other discourses surrounding cinema, particularly those involving written texts. This has created the impression that serious film criticism and theory are the exclusive domain of the West. Scholars of the history of Japanese cinema have largely ignored print documentation (magazines, books, advertising, archival materials) in favor of producing texts that consist of strings of individual film descriptions and analyses alternating with narrativized historical context. However, what goes on the screen is, of course, far more than the story of the production and the directors behind the camera. In this sense, the study of Japanese cinema is a wide-open field, one into which many new scholars from a variety of disciplines are moving. This book explores the prevailing conceptions of the relationship of cinematic representation to the world and cinema's function in society. Thus this is a history of documentary in Japan *and* writing about documentary in Japan, the films and the criticism.

A history of documentary in this period must also account for the crisscrossing political forces of legislation and government terrorism. This is worth a close look, particularly for the benefit of readers who are unfamiliar with the historiographic debates within postwar Japanese studies. Both criticism and filmmaking are very public activities subject to the vagaries of power. In the five decades after the invention of cinema, Japan's domestic situation underwent massive transformation. With expansionist ambitions, foreign competition, and growing political and economic pressures, Japan embarked on an imperial path that brought it head-to-head with its neighbors and the Great Powers. As Japan's battle lines expanded across Asia and the Pacific, the government's attempts to manage the lives of the nation's citizens increased steadily. In the United States, our images

of Japan in the late 1930s and early 1940s come mostly from wartime popular culture and propaganda documentaries produced by the U.S. government, such as those in Frank Capra's "Why We Fight" series: ghastly massacres on the Chinese mainland, total control of citizens on the home islands, and fanatical soldiers fighting for death, not survival. We imagine a Japanese fascism complementing the political and social systems of Japan's Axis partners, Germany and Italy, an image of Japan actually encouraged by the Japanese propaganda documentaries of the time. Although ironic, it was no wonder the filmmakers of the U.S. Signal Corps plundered captured Japanese documentaries to portray an evil, fascist Japan in American propaganda.

The fact that such images are deeply rooted in the propaganda of both countries is precisely why we must be careful when approaching the Japanese documentaries of this era. More recent histories of the prewar period reveal a far less monolithic Japan, and the majority of historians now hesitate to use the word *fascism*. In this newer portrait we see a political system fractured by competing interests and fearful of domestic strife and disunity. Leftist film critics and historians in Japan often use words like *fascist* and *absolutist* when referring to this period, but we must be wary of such terms. For example, we should not confuse the popular sense and the strict definition of the term *fascism*. Although many people use the term to describe any oppressive system, from dictatorships to the authority wielded by meter maids, it is more strictly defined as a political movement brought to power by a popular push from below. By its very nature, fascism enjoys powerful support, and this enables fascist leaders to implement strict, radical controls. Whether fascism occurred in Japan or not has been the subject of rigorous and lengthy debate among postwar historians. However, this discussion is trapped within the discourse of political science, so it relies primarily on organized political structures for the terms of the debate. Recently, Leslie Pincus sidestepped the debate over the definition of fascist political systems to historicize what she calls "a fascist turn in critical discourse," a perspective I share.[6] When one looks at other areas of Japanese society, especially art and intellectual pursuits, the similarities to European varieties of fascism are undeniable. Indeed, a comparison to Francoist cinema deeply informs my understanding of the style of Japanese cinema during the China and Pacific Wars.

The discursive similarities among various brands of fascism are striking, but the particularities of political development also bear on the film world. Unlike many nations in postcolonial situations, Japan did not have the European style of centralized nation-state imposed upon it; Japan picked its model carefully, under the assumption that it was a choice between

adopting Western practice or suffering colonization. Until the 1930s, the development of Japan's constitutional government had been overseen by the genro, a group of powerful imperial advisers whose influence rested on their late-nineteenth-century exploits as founders of the modern state. They proved to be efficient leaders, particularly in difficult times such as the Russo-Japanese War. However, the constitution made no provision for their replacement. When they died, the nation was on its own, and power was anything but unified at the top. There were powerful bureaucrats, politicians in the Diet, and various factions in the military all coming in and out of positions of influence. The factors that led Japan into war involve a vast constellation of reactions and pushes from above, below, outside, and inside. What is crucial to acknowledge is that the government's grip on power and people was far from absolute, and those in positions of power (and the citizenry to varying degrees) knew it. By the early part of the twentieth century, the economy was seriously fractured between urban and rural segments. Complicating this uneven development were an interventionary policy by the state bureaucracy and a rising mass culture. This emerging mass also represented new aspirations for participation in politics and heady expressions of social power, forcing enfranchised elites to deal with the issue of franchisement. During the 1920s and 1930s, dominant groups searched for ways to harness this popular energy by connecting the interests of the subordinate classes to their own, inventing a subject for their rule. Two events in 1925, the first year of the Shōwa era, sum up the contradictions built into this process: on the one hand, male citizens were granted universal suffrage; on the other hand, the government enacted the Peace Preservation Law (Chian Iji Hō).[7] The former represented the culmination of moves toward broadening the franchise in the previous Taishō era, and the latter formalized restrictions on political life. Throughout the subsequent two decades, the Peace Preservation Law was the legal apparatus that empowered the government to threaten and control the film industry. Because of this situation, a conception of Japanese politics that focuses on the grand performances of consent during the war followed by open repudiation after surrender is far too narrow. In the context of this discussion, such a conception represents too impoverished a view of art in an age of stricture.

This is a central issue here, as documentary was in its formative years during this period; its development is inseparable from the larger transformations in Japanese society. The gradual militarization of film culture is undeniable. One fascinating way to experience the shift vicariously is to sit down with full runs of periodicals and page through them chronologically. Magazines emerged, transformed, and died out in distinct cycles. Their

names changed with ideological shifts, with the changes often reflecting the growing government and police pressure on the cinema. Once-handsome journals eventually transformed into thin, irregularly published pamphlets. After the Manchurian Incident, the war gradually infiltrated the pages of film magazines, as reflected in the subject matter of articles, the attitudes of the authors, and the films being made, critiqued, and advertised. The fighting made itself felt more and more through photographs, drawings, and more reserved use of color—even *kanji* (Chinese characters) changed to older styles. As the war dragged on, the quality of the paper used went downhill, and many of the magazines now dissolve into dust in the historian's hands. Bindings became increasingly flimsy, and near the end of World War II, the last remaining film magazine, *Nippon Eiga* (Japanese film), ended up as nothing more than a pamphlet distributed exclusively within the film industry. A trip through the magazines of the day provides a material glimpse of the massive changes occurring through decades of social transformation and total war.

At the same time, one notices something else, something perhaps more surprising. Amid all the reviews of war films, reports from the front lines, images of tanks, planes, and soldiers, there is an undercurrent in striking contrast to the trend in militarization. All the way up to World War II, one can find plenty of jazzy, colorful advertisements for Hollywood films next to deadly serious celebrations of war heroics. Examined from this perspective, this so-called dark valley in Japanese history was also an exciting time for filmmaking that had more to do with the thrill of modernity than with the war in China. This variety of discourses strongly suggests that there was far more to the Japan of this period than the popular imagination allows, not to mention the propaganda documentaries that helped form this imaginary in the first place. Enjoyable chaos underneath the veneer of seriousness—this is a manifestation of the fractured nature of power. This fractiousness also helps explain why propaganda documentaries of the period were replete with images of unity. How do we come to understand power relations in our approach to cinema of this era when the "powerless" must adapt strategic poses in the presence of the powerful, and when the powerful may have a stake in *overdramatizing* their reputation and mastery? This is a fundamental question for an investigation of documentary cinema in Japan.

As demonstrated by James C. Scott, even in a situation characterized by brutal oppression and pitiful obsequiousness, the power dynamic is much subtler than the equation domination = submission.[8] Drawing on an amazing variety of examples culled from many periods in history and many cultures, Scott argues that the display of power is part and parcel of a public

discourse shared by both the powerful and the powerless, each of whom creates a discursive field hidden from the other that speaks a different vocabulary. The terms of the public discourse are determined by those in positions of domination and include all the publicly displayed codes—all verbal, gestural, linguistic, and symbolic communication and representation—that naturalize their power over symbolic groups. Both the dominating and the dominated cooperate in the construction and display of discourse in the public realm. A prime example would be the government-sponsored propaganda film that audiences quietly endure.

Both dominant and subordinate groups also have their own hidden discourses, which are shared within their own separate, private spaces. For the latter, Scott offers examples in the dialects of the working classes, the secret church services of American slaves in the antebellum South, gestures, storytelling, gossip, graffiti, and theater, as well as their expression of the hidden discourses in anonymity and ambiguity. What is particularly useful for this investigation of Japanese cinema is the suggestion that the dominant also keep a hidden discursive field, one concealed by displays of power and consent in public and shared behind closed doors in government offices, men's clubs, and the like. Despite their confident exertion of power in public, the dominant are always less than sure about their grip on subordinates. Their power is actually split and subject to forces from below; thus, as Foucault has pointed out, power runs in every direction and is supported by a multiplicity of institutions and discourses.

Cultural studies critics are generally interested in the "noise" of subcultures that resist hegemonizing forces dramatically, as well as the constant flux of commodification that comes to bear on apparently resistant styles. To the extent that these kinds of studies concentrate on "spectacular subcultures," they do not provide adequate critical tools for understanding situations such as that existing in Japan in the 1930s, where top-down applications of power strove to eliminate "noise" with "CD-quality sound," often through the deployment of repressive state apparatuses and surveillance. Cultural studies works best for examining communities that wear their resistance proudly. In this sense it may be more useful for understanding the earlier proletarian arts movement in Japan in the late 1920s and early 1930s, which flaunted its discontent and contempt for the dominant culture. We might profitably see the participation of well-educated intellectuals in this political movement as the stylistic choice of a spectacular subculture, at least until the mass arrests and the occasional assassination began.

Put in Scott's terms, our image of a fascist or absolutist Japan comes directly from the pose the nation assumed in the public arena, a process we

may chart in documentaries of the time. Throughout the 1930s, a gradual agreement, hardening, or conventionalization is evident in public discourses such as the cinema. The unified power of the state being put on display was, in fact, split and shared among numerous competitors, including bureaucrats, politicians, businessmen, and soldiers. As their enforcement of these conventions turned severe, more and more discourse was either coopted or squeezed underground to the protection of the hidden. Cinema, that most public of media, came to pose a vision of Japan that made a spectacle of central power and unity under the emperor. This complicates the common notion of propaganda, that seamless discourse that confidently imposes its vision of the nation and the world on its audience. Too often, this confidence of the propagandist is taken for granted, as is the simple acceptance or rejection of propaganda by audiences.[9]

Although the terms *public discourse* and *hidden discourse* appear binary at first glance, they are much more akin to an image of pressure. It must be remembered that public discourse hides the fractiousness of power relations at all levels of society. A brief, but concrete, example is provided by *Japan in Time of Crisis* (Hijōji Nippon; 1933), one of the key texts that can help us to understand these developments in the 1930s. This film is replete with images of unity and stylistic strategies that pose its source of enunciation as the national polity. However, this veneer of national consonance hides sharp dissonance among a variety of ambitious and antagonistic forces. For example, the film must be understood as an attempt by its narrator, Army Minister Araki Sadao, to jockey for position within the army on behalf of his Imperial Way faction. It also represents parallel aspirations on the part of its producers, Mainichi newspapers and the army, to compete within their respective spheres of influence. Mainichi was staking claim to the forefront of nonfiction filmmaking, and the army desired to justify ever greater military expenditures for protecting the "Way of the Nation." This cinematic bid for budget moneys must in turn be seen as a rivalry with the navy, which had its own contemporaneous documentary spectacular in *Lifeline of the Sea* (Umi no seimeisen; 1933). In addition to this kind of competition among elites, subordinate groups always exerted pressures as well. For instance, in *Japan in Time of Crisis* the spectacles of both left-wing and popular cultures are clearly troublesome. The forces exerted by these groups go unacknowledged in the seamlessness of the public discursive field. It is never a simplistic matter of bifurcating singular entities—powerful versus powerless. The discussion presented in the following chapters always assumes a multiplicity of competing forces that shape each other, compromising any easy division between public and private in most cases.

Although it is a simple task to use archives of public documents, cinematic and otherwise, to learn "what happened," such research is inevitably incomplete without attention to what remains in hiding; reading between the lines of these documents poses an enormous challenge to the historian. Scott points us toward the moments when the hidden ruptures into public view, through grumbling, slowdowns, or open displays of defiance. He also helps us understand why moments when hidden discourse is finally revealed—the Velvet Revolution, Rosa Parks's refusal to move to the back of the bus, the man in shirtsleeves facing down a line of tanks approaching Tiananmen Square—are so explosive and capable of provoking either extreme repression or revolution. Most important, he offers a convincing explanation for why such acts of resistance are possible in the first place, because they all rely on the hidden discourses circulating among subordinate groups for both the substance and the vocabulary of what they defiantly articulate, as well as the sheer guts required to expose the hidden in the teeth of power.

The division between public and private is most explicitly maintained in extremely binary confrontations between clear structures of domination, such as slavery and serfdom. Each of these situations involves an enormous gap between the vision of the world in the public discourse and the lived world of the dominated. Clearly, the borders demarcating acceptable public representations for Japanese on the home islands during World War II were less problematic than, say, those for the Chinese and Koreans living in occupied territory. In fact, as we shall also find, the terms of domination and submission were built on a hierarchy structured by proximity to the emperor, and to the extent we keep this in mind we will complicate any simplistic schema dividing the public and private and at the same time avoid an unqualified romanticization of resistance. What does the historian do when the public and hidden discourses seem less opposed, more adjacent, or even of the same fabric, and our resistance heroes and their actions seem suddenly ambiguous—placed somewhere in an indeterminable middle? These are issues with which the Japanese documentary confronts us, and they only grow in complexity as we write its history.

Every dynamic in this scenario may be found in the history of the Japanese documentary film. The bold displays of the public discourse in the propaganda film are obvious; however, the following chapters also uncover daring and dangerous expressions of the hidden discursive field that leaked into view in both filmmaking and film criticism. The book closes with the full-throated exposure of the hidden discourse immediately after the Japanese surrender in 1945.

We make this journey in the first five chapters of this volume. Chapter 1, "A Prehistory of the Japanese Documentary," covers the first decades of cinema in Japan. The chapter explores when the sense of a nonfiction cinema emerged and highlights the most important films of this era of invention and growth. In chapter 2, "The Innovation of Prokino," I discuss the proletarian film movement, which can be seen as both a foundational and a transitional moment in Japanese documentary film. In chapter 3, "A Hardening of Style," I chart the conventionalization of filmic representation, starting with the Manchurian Incident films and the crushing of the left-wing film movement and continuing through the Pacific War. In chapter 4, "Stylish Charms: When Hard Style Becomes Hard Reality," I explore the issues surrounding ideology, focusing on representations of gender and violence. In chapter 5, "The Last Stand of Theory," I present some of the thorny problems faced by historians who rely simply on primary documents created in the public sphere. Using the example of *tenkō* (ideological conversion) as a gateway to the hidden spaces, I analyze moments in the history of Japanese documentary when discontent comes into view, particularly in film theory and criticism. I continue this discussion in chapter 6 by presenting the example of Kamei Fumio, one of the best—and least known—documentary filmmakers in history. In the final chapter, "After Apocalypse: Obliteration of the Nation," I analyze the first two documentaries made after Japan's surrender. These films seem to propose two alternative answers to the problem of documentary representation in the wake of the evaporation of the wartime public discursive field, that is, with the demise of the codes filmmakers had developed over the previous half century. Significantly, both films encountered stiff resistance, censorship, and ultimately total suppression—clear indications of the creation of new public discourses for the postwar era.

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[1] A Prehistory of the Japanese Documentary

First Films

The title of this chapter implies the existence of a period of formation preceding the emergence of the Japanese documentary proper—perhaps an age of a "protodocumentary." In fact, the chapter title is something of a hedge. As far as I am concerned, the first films made in Japan were all documentary, thus the hedge is not a hesitation as much as an indication of the problems of naming. The reader may feel uncomfortable with the casual use of the term *documentary* here, preferring to reserve it for certain kinds of films with more ambitious (or perhaps "lofty") intent. However, every definition involves exclusion, and when writing at the general level it is best to point in many directions at once. In any case, with the proliferation of films in documentary form over the course of the past two decades, no one is quite sure what the term *documentary* means anymore. The popular sense of the word in Japan has degenerated so that it is used to refer to television gossip shows and the *dokyumento* shelves at video stores, which generally stock collections of snuff films. The use of the term in these pages is a claim on behalf of Japanese documentary for a significant body of films, criticism, theory, and thought in the first half of the twentieth century. My limits for the field of documentary are comfortably vague. Pushed to give a terser definition, I would probably fall back on the convenient gloss handed down from John Grierson: documentary is the creative treatment of actuality. However, as I show in chapter 3, when Japanese filmmakers and critics attempted to translate this phrase, its meaning was far from obvious. Retreating even from Grierson's definition, let us say this is the story of filmmaking that claimed a special relationship to reality.

Turning to the beginnings of cinema in Japan leads us directly to the

jikkyō eiga (real conditions film) or the *jissha eiga* (actuality film or photo-realistic film). After the turn of the century, and as the conception of non-fiction developed, this kind of film was described in many ways: as the *kiroku eiga* (record film), the *senden eiga* (propaganda film), the *senden-sendō eiga* (agitprop film), the *kagaku eiga* (science film), the *kogata eiga* (small-gauge film), the *kyōiku eiga* (education film), the *jiji eiga* (current events film), the *nyūsu eiga* (news film), the *senkyō eiga* (war conditions film), the *senki eiga* (battle record film), the *bunka eiga* (culture film), and, finally, the *dokyumentarii eiga*. This multitude of signs for the nonfiction film soon became familiar territory.

As in other parts of the world, the first films in Japan were actualities, short snippets of scenes from everyday life. The first Cinématographe and Vitagraph arrived on Japanese soil almost simultaneously in 1897, sparking a vigorous competition that would characterize the nonfiction cinema for the next three decades. I will not dwell on the details of the first film production and screening here, as lively descriptions of this early period have been written by Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie and by Peter High.[1] Anyone who has seen Lumière actualities can imagine what these films must be like from their titles, such as *Diner japonais* (Girel, 1897), *Arrivée d'un train* (Girel, 1897), *Déchargement dans un port* (1897), *Un pont à Kyoto* (Girel, 1897), *Une rue à Tokyo* (Girel, 1897), *Danseuses japonaises* (Girel, 1897), *Les Aïnus à Yeso, I* (Girel, 1897), and *Une scène au théatre japonais* (Girel 1897).

This selection is from the first thirty-three films shot in Japan by Shibata Tsunekichi, Inabata Katsutarō, Gabriel Veyre, and Constant Girel for the Lumière catalog before the turn of the century.[2] Inabata had been a friend of Auguste Lumière when he studied in Lyon from 1877 to 1885. When he returned to Japan from Paris in January 1897, he brought with him a Cinématographe and a cameraman by the name of Girel. A second cameraman, Gabriel Veyre, stopped in Japan after photographing Central and South America, the United States, and the Dutch East Indies. Not surprisingly, many of these films are infused with the flavor of *orientalisme*. Seen today, the overly repetitive scenes of kimono-clad girls dancing next to ponds point to the entranced foreign subjectivity behind the camera. At the same time, a number of these films are striking. There are Japanese versions of actualities from the very first Lumière program: a train arriving at a station (in Nagoya), Inabata eating dinner with his wife and daughter. Some of the most interesting films record the dances of the Ainu, the indigenous people of Japan. These precious images are some of the only pre-war documentaries of the Ainu—along with amateur films shot in the 1920s and Sakane Tazuko's 1937 documentary.[3] This was a period when

Ainu culture was under attack, and few moving-image records were made before the ethnographic rescue films of Himeda Tadayoshi in the 1970s.

The Lumière actualities shot on the streets of Ginza, Kyoto, and Nihonbashi are nondescript but fascinating. Passersby had no idea what the cameramen were doing and stopped dead in their tracks to gaze at the cameras. Amid all the bustle, people innocently returned the camera's gaze. These films capture that brief age preceding the camera's ability to create a charged space of surveillance and self-consciousness wherever it points. In contrast, the entertainers shot by these early cameramen were quite self-conscious about the space of the camera. After fending off attackers in a frenzy of swordplay, the performer in *Acteurs japonais: Bataille au sabre* ends the scene frozen, eyes wild, in a heroic pose from Kabuki. When he breaks the pose, relaxes, and starts to walk away, someone points out to him that the camera is still running and he jumps back into position. These moments impress us with their lack of constraint. Such freshness and simplicity continue to be among the pleasures of documentary, despite the complex assembly of rules and codes constructed in the ensuing years.

One of the first steps toward this coding and conventionalization was the shift from the general to the specific. The films from the Lumière catalog clearly fit certain molds: the family scene, the performer, the farm, the beautiful woman, the train arriving at a station. The geisha and Ainu performing their dances for the camera constitute different cultures filling the same general slot in the catalog. The first shift to something more specific, more particular and difficult to duplicate, was probably the photography of the Boxer Rebellion *(Hokushin jihen)* in 1900. In the wake of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, antiforeigner sentiment grew in China. A group known as the Boxers were particularly violent and began to threaten Beijing by 1900. A seven-power force entered to suppress the movement. These geopolitical developments occurred just as the Yoshizawa camera shop in Tokyo began turning cinema into a capitalized business. The Yoshizawa cameramen shot films, built word-of-mouth reputations with big-city runs, and sold prints to entrepreneurs in other parts of the country. Shibata Yoshitsune and Fukatani Komakichi took a newly imported Gaumont camera and twenty rolls of film and accompanied the eight-thousand-man contingent of Japanese troops sent with forces from the great powers to suppress the Boxers. They showed the results across Japan starting in October 1900. The films are no longer extant, but newspaper accounts of the time describe scenes such as officers and horses being loaded aboard ships and views of cities along the way to Beijing.[4]

The Boxer footage shot by Shibata and Fukatani has been called Japan's first *jiji eiga* (current events film), a form that quickly proved

profitable for the new entrepreneurs. Certainly there were other kinds of films being made in this early period, but the ones that survived in the pages of the history books are these *jiji eiga* of specific events reported in other media. For example, Yoshizawa's cameramen went on to shoot *Actuality of the Funeral of Kikugorō V* (Godaime Kikugorō sōgi jikkyō; 1903), *Actuality of the Osaka Kangyō Exhibition* (Osaka Kangyō hakurankai jikkyō; 1903), *Actuality of a Ship Christening in Kobe* (Kobe kansenshiki jikkyō; 1903), and *Actuality of the Kyoto Gion Festival* (Kyoto Gion Matsuri jikkyō; 1903). Other actualities recorded sumo matches, Kabuki scenes performed by popular actors, unique events such as funerals of royal family members and Kabuki actors, and public events such as exhibitions and festivals.

This shift from the general to the specific in the documentary's vicarious, virtual experiences of reality culminated with the outbreak of war against Russia in February 1904. These two powers came to loggerheads over imperial ambitions in Northeast Asia, specifically over Russia's refusal to withdraw from Manchuria, which it had occupied since it took advantage of the opportunity to do so during the Boxer Rebellion. The Russo-Japanese War proved costly in terms of both money and lives, and the Japanese government knew it required great sacrifices from the people. Through an uncommonly successful disinformation campaign accomplished with the cooperation of the newly forming and rapidly expanding mass media, the government whipped citizens into a nationalistic fervor that blinded them to the sacrifice of lives and the strains on the economy resulting from the nation's floating one loan after another. Knowing they could not sustain a prolonged conflict, the genro brought the war to a hasty end by signing the Portsmouth Treaty. However, their efforts on the public relations front proved too successful: the duped populace rioted upon hearing of concessions to Russia. Tens of thousands rioted in Tokyo, burning or dismantling 70 percent of the city's police boxes. Thousands of people were arrested, hundreds were injured, and seventeen were killed.[5] The cooperation of print media leaders and the fierce competition between newspapers and magazines added up to this uncommonly successful campaign of disinformation.

The role of the cinema in this affair is somewhat difficult to judge, but there is no question it contributed to the furor lit by the treaty. Cameramen from all over the world converged on Manchuria to capture the war on photographic plates, stereopticon cards, and motion picture film. Once again the Yoshizawa Company sent cameramen to the front, and other companies soon followed. Their films converted cinema from a sideshow attraction to a mass medium. As the print media whipped up nationalistic

support with report after report of easy, heroic victories, people were eager to see the spectacles they were reading about. Films from the front played a supplementary role to newspapers, an institutional position most nonfiction cinema would hold well into the 1930s. The popularity of these films can be seen in the Yoshizawa camera shop's postwar catalog of 1910, which lists more than ninety Russo-Japanese War subjects.[6] The films themselves are spectacular, but they are also terribly repetitive. They can be grouped generically into skirmishes on land, battles at sea, triumphant return, and heroic departures for the front. Occasionally, famous personalities such as General Nogi Maresuke make on-screen appearances. The battles at sea generally feature obscure images of gunships lobbing charges; land combat films include mostly scenes of lines of soldiers dug in and shooting at unseen enemies (photographed from either side of the lines). Columns of soldiers trudge across the continent and occasionally engage in dramatic hand-to-hand combat.

Although short and simple, these films wielded uncommon power for audiences excited by newspaper accounts of easy victories. These spectators had been newly brought into the nation-state through an education system that taught the infallibility of the emperor and established their membership in the nation. A contemporary account by essayist Uchida Hyakken provides a sense of how effectively these films solicited identification with this national project across the Sea of Japan. Watching the *jikkyō eiga* of some unidentified foreign cameraman, he identifies so intensely with the images of marching soldiers that he imagines himself stepping into the diegetic space of the screen and merging into the column of troops:

> Wrapped in darkness, the spectators suddenly burst into applause.
>
> All at once tears streamed from my eyes. The line of soldiers—each form similar—continued endlessly. With my eyes clouded with tears, it seemed like the people walking away from me were disappearing from view. The surroundings became unfamiliar, and I felt like I was lost in a place where I knew no one.
>
> "Don't cry," said the man walking next to me.
>
> And behind me, I could hear another voice crying.
>
> The clapping still had not stopped. Tears glossing my cheeks, I chased the end of that line, and in the midst of a town which was completely silent, I followed them wherever they were going.[7]

As we will see, this profound identification with both the cinematic apparatus and the representation of the nation it projects made it privileged among all media in the eyes of the new nation-state. However, it must be remembered that at this early date this cinematic experience involved far more than what was on the screen. As spectators entered the

theater, they passed flags, banners, and a barker calling them in by appealing to their national spirit.[8] Inside, they watched the films accompanied by military music and the jingoistic narration of a *benshi*.[9] There were also *rensageki,* or chain dramas, in which stage plays dramatizing battlefield valor alternated between scenes using live actors and cinematic sequences of war spectacle impossible to reproduce on the stage—images of torpedo attacks, ships at sea, explosions, and the enemy himself.[10]

A Homogeneous Cinema

This mix of theatricality and actuality had its counterpart in the films themselves. As in the foreign films of the Boer and Spanish-American Wars, many scenes of the Russo-Japanese War actualities were staged or reenacted. These films are filled with melodramatic battle deaths in pitched battles freely mixed with on-the-scene reportage. Sometimes, the immediate difference between adjacent shots is striking for the contrast between theatricality and actuality. Historians such as Satō Tadao have pointed to this phenomenon as the founding moment of *yarase* in Japanese documentary. An important term in the history of postwar documentary, *yarase* refers to the specious attempt to dupe audiences into taking the reality represented on screen for granted, posing fiction as fact. However, historians who use the term *yarase* to describe the mix of fiction and nonfiction in Russo-Japanese War films are less interested in understanding early cinema than in accounting for the lies of the later documentaries produced during the China and Pacific Wars. They treat the indeterminate mulch of fictive and nonfictive elements in the actualities as an originary moment for *yarase*. But there are other ways of approaching these films as well.

The implications of this liberal mixing of "fake" and "for real" have been taken up by Komatsu Hiroshi, who, in his ambitious book *Kigen no Eiga* (Cinema of origin), attempts to analyze and describe the chronological development of film style in the early cinema. In one chapter, Komatsu charts the circumstances that led to the conception of a cinema bifurcated by fictionality and nonfictionality.[11] He asserts that any such analysis must proceed from the "interior" of film history and root out differences straddling historical transitions and the manner in which they appear in cinema. In this sense, the true/false of the cinema changes at each stage of its history.

Komatsu begins with Muybridge and Marey, whose common point of intersection is an interest in recording movement. This constituted a major set of subject matter for the first few years of cinema. We find this kind of film in Japan as well in the actualities of trains arriving in stations and

people charging through the streets, a form of cinema at its seemingly most objective. It may be difficult to imagine fiction residing in these early films, but the apparent objectivity of this prototype for the documentary cinema transforms quickly into a form that problematizes the simple division between truth and falsehood.

Generally, early film history is built on a structural progression from nonfiction to fiction, but Komatsu points out that if we can think of nonfiction and fiction as two concepts we can also imagine a field somewhere in the middle. This cast of ambiguity is something we find in many early films. For example, many of the most famous films made before the Russo-Japanese War were scenes adapted from Kabuki plays. Not surprisingly, Komatsu refers to the film often identified as the first "fiction film" in Japan, *Viewing Scarlet Maple Leaves* (Momijigari, also known as *Maple Leaf Hunters*; 1899). Shot by Shibata Tsunekichi, this film captured a performance by the two most beloved Kabuki actors of the day, Onoe Kikugorō V and Ichikawa Danjūrō IX. In the sense that *Viewing Scarlet Maple Leaves* is the telling of a segment culled from a much larger, well-known Kabuki story through gesture, costume, and background, we can say it creates a certain diegetic effect. At the same time, the air of nonfiction in this film is unmistakable. This is a record of two of the most famous artists of their time, preserving their performance for posterity (a condition of the filming was that the results would not be screened publicly until after Danjūrō's death). Furthermore, in the middle of the performance, nature adds the flavor of nonfiction. In a letter to Tanaka Jun'ichirō, cameraman Shibata described the filming:

> There was a gusting wind that morning. We decided to do all the shooting in a small outdoor stage reserved for tea parties behind the Kabuki-za. We hurriedly set up the stage, fearing all the time that Danjūrō might suddenly change his mind again. Every available hand, including Inoue, was called upon to hold the backdrop firm in the strong wind. Danjūrō, playing Sarashi-the-Maiden, was to dance with two fans. The wind tore one from his hand and it fluttered off to one side. Re-shooting was out of the question and so the mistake stayed in the picture. Later people were to remark that this gave the piece its great charm.[12]

This indeterminate mixture of fiction and nonfiction constitutes a central feature of Japanese cinema in the early period. Extant sumo films from the Meiji era show a mixture of serious bouts and acrobatic stunt sumo reminiscent of comedy sequences from later fiction films such as Matsunosuke's *Shibukawa Bangoro* (1922). Kabuki films such as *Viewing Scarlet Maple Leaves* emphasize both storytelling and the reality of the telling. Indeed, the conceptual split on which this observation is based has

little or no meaning at this stage of the cinema, thus the early film catalogs of the Lumières, Yoshizawa, and others lump clearly staged films of historical events with scenery and travel films.

Komatsu calls this a "homogeneous cinema." From today's perspective, the most problematic films are the newsreels, which raise far more questions than their theatrical counterparts like *Viewing Scarlet Maple Leaves*. Part of the attraction of the news films involved the same curiosity that infuses the simple actualities of scenery of faraway lands; however, the news films set themselves apart by claiming to represent reality. The claim of "truthfulness" was etched into their titles with the word *jikkyō,* literally, "actual conditions." The Lumières began shooting such films as early as 1896, with their reportage of Wilhelm I's funeral and the wedding of the prince of Napoli. Here, the difference between reportage and scenery is still a subjective call. However, around the turn of the century, films of the Boer and Spanish-American Wars brought a new complexity to the cinema with their frequent use of reenactment.

To account for the new forms we find in these films, Komatsu makes a distinction between *kōsei sareta nyūsu eiga* (constructed news films) and *nise nyūsu eiga* (fake news films). Constructed news films utilize stage-set reenactments and miniature models to describe historical events. The methods seem extreme, but Komatsu argues that there was no clear differentiation between fiction and nonfiction. He traces this practice back to Méliès's depiction of the Greek-Turkish War in *Combat naval en Grèce* (1897). The French pioneer tried quite a few of these re-creations. He made five films on the sinking of the *Maine* using models and made mixed films that combined active reportage with stylized, stage-bound reenactments, such as those of the Dreyfus incident. Constructed news films were made in England, the United States, and Japan until the end of the Russo-Japanese War. In the United States, Billy Bitzer rendered the San Francisco earthquake and the eruption of Vesuvius with models. Selig made films of the Russo-Japanese War naval battles with miniature ships floating in tanks.[13]

As previously noted, there were also many live-action outdoor reenactments of these wars; these are the films Komatsu terms *nise nyūsu eiga*. Edison's James H. White did them, staging the Boer War in the open fields of West Orange, New Jersey. Edwin S. Porter waged the Russo-Japanese War before Edison cameras for *Skirmish between Russian and Japanese Advance Guards* (1904), scenes of which were clipped and integrated with actual footage in Japanese films such as *Reminiscing about the Russo-Japanese War* (Nichi-Ro sensō omoiokose; circa 1905). Examining these fake news films, we may understand how producers had begun to comprehend the mechanics of news films' reality effect. As the number of



Figure 1. Edwin S. Porter's fake news film, *Skirmish between Russian and Japanese Advance Guards* (1904). Courtesy of Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, Tokyo Office.

shots within a given film grew, the camera angles and spatial manipulation increased as well. The filmmakers shot staged scenes from a variety of angles and from positions distanced from the action in order to achieve the reality effect found in on-the-spot reportage.

Both the constructed and fake news films were predicated on their (re)construction of reality through human labor, or, as Komatsu puts it, they both took the reality of a historical event and made this their object. In this sense, they formed a homogeneous cinema, and they were liberally mixed with on-the-spot actualities—both in the pages of catalogs and within the same film programs, or even within the same films. However, even though the newsreel as we know it today—an organized, journalistic effort to report news in a visual version of the newspaper—began in 1909 with the *Pathé Journal* (or, in Japan, in 1914 with the semimonthly *Tokyo Cinema Pictorial* [Tokyo shinema gahō]), the shift in the concept of reality in the consciousness of the spectators occurred between 1905 and 1906, roughly at the time of the end of the Russo-Japanese War. Komatsu writes: "As can be seen in the constructed news film, one kind of illusionism in early cinema consists of scenery backgrounds and elaborately constructed miniature models. However, after 1906 the imitative illusionism of cinema is built on

a more primitive root of the cinema, the ambivalence between truthfulness and falsity latent in the first films of the pioneers."[14] Komatsu reasons that the 1906 split coincided with the move from vaudeville and temporary theaters to regular, permanent movie houses. It was a period when spectators looked at the cinema as more than a simple novelty or medium of entertainment. The move to permanent homes signaled cinema's autonomy from other amusements, at least in a structural and economic sense, and with its separation from the hands of itinerant entertainers it returned to the seemingly objective recording of movement—only now it captured the movement of history.

The Nonfiction/Fiction Split

Recently, Komatsu had the chance to reevaluate his discussion of the development of a nonfiction cinema at conferences and screenings of early films celebrating the cinema centenary. He has begun to hedge on his periodization:

> The fact that *Viewing Scarlet Maple Leaves* exhibits both qualities is not too surprising a discovery, given that the development of the oppositional conception of fiction versus nonfiction itself occurred later in film history, and that the mode of representation in early cinema was defined by a form of absolute representation rejecting such a dualism. What is rather more surprising is the fact that this absolute representationalism became the pattern which continued to rule over later Japanese cinema. In fact, in most cases, Japanese film—in the genres of *shinpa* tragedy or of *kyūgeki*—continued to deny the development of the notions of fiction and nonfiction. . . . This was because Japanese cinema, even into the late 1910s, opted to maintain an absolute representationalism that could not be regarded as either fiction nor nonfiction. It did this through continuing to produce films as moving illustrations of well-known stories, to use intertitles only as the titles of scenes composed at the screenwriting stage, to show an aversion to American cinematic illusionism, and to make the story depend on the patterned acting of the performers and on the detailed narration of the *benshi.* Japanese cinema continued in this unique state up until the 1910s, leaving the field of what was regarded as nonfiction cinema, while not absent, at least inactive.[15]

Komatsu's reformulation of his periodization may be seen as a privileging of the fiction film, a perspective on the issue of nonfiction oriented toward understanding the development of fiction. This is something quite different from a look at "the genesis of nonfiction film" as promised in his article's title. After 1906, documentary achieved a significant measure of autonomy; this had little to do with the number of films produced, which

seems to be Komatsu's measure for advancement and development. Earlier, however, he stressed the importance of spectators' *conception* of fiction and nonfiction (or at least their "nonconception" or ambivalence). If we refocus our attention on conception as opposed to style and volume, we see the cinema clearly split. Indeed, toward the end of the Russo-Japanese War, spectators began to complain about the fake news films and constructed news films included in their programs. Peter High quotes a reviewer in the *Kobe Shinbun* in mid-1905 who protested:

> Unlike the false "real footage" of the battle which has been coming to our country, this [film] was definitely shot on the actual battlefield and is of extraordinary interest. Furthermore, for all its on-the-spot origin, it is bright, clear and rather well-developed. The fact that it is not organized into any clear sequence, like other phony footage, makes it all the more profound. A real battlefield is all confused and apparently without any logic at all. We are appalled at the scenes of sappers setting out on their grisly work, at the mounds of bloody, mangled flesh littering the slopes of Ridge 203. We see the actual General Nogi and the actual Stessl, along with our triumphal march into Port Arthur. The tragic scenery of the battlefield unfolds before our very eyes, albeit without sound or color. This is truly something worthy of viewing as soon as possible.[16]

This rhetoric valuing truth and reality demands that we pursue an alternative way of looking at the indeterminate style of the story films Komatsu describes through the 1910s in Japan. Rather than making claims for a continuing homogeneity, we might shift positions to recognize the potential influence of emerging documentary codes on fictional modes of cinema. Generally, historians have oriented their discussions of the relationship of fiction and documentary from the opposite direction. However, we might profitably compare the influence of the early documentary's power on the indeterminate fiction film to the influence of Kabuki theater on *kyūgeki.* This is to reconceptualize nonfiction in a dominant position, even if it may be "relatively inactive." There are, in fact, plenty of films firmly in the field of nonfiction after the Russo-Japanese War, even if their numbers seem small relative to their quasi-fictional counterparts.

For example, one postwar film firmly premised on a claim of fidelity for its representation of reality—a film whose existence would be difficult to explain in an indeterminate, homogeneous cinema—is *Scene of His Imperial Highness the Prince of Korea and Ito Hirobumi Entering the Imperial Palace* (Kankoku Kōtaishi Denka, Itō Daishi Kankoku omiya nyūkyō no kōkei; 1907). After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan began to draw Korea into its sphere of control, a process supervised by genro Itō Hirobumi. Actual annexation occurred around the end of the decade. Koreans naturally

resisted their own colonization, so the prince was brought to Japan in an attempt to legitimate Japanese power. During his stay in Japan, a rumor broke out back in Korea that the prince had been assassinated—clear evidence of a situation of domination (or, put another way, a guarded expression of the discontent released from the hidden discourses created within an atmosphere of suppression and fear). Anxious to quell suspicions of Japanese misdeeds, Itō had Yoshizawa's Kawaura Ken'ichi shoot a film of the Korean prince enjoying his holiday in Japan. The film was immediately shipped to Korea and shown up and down the peninsula. This extraordinary effort in 1907 would have been meaningless without a widely held conception of nonfiction, a recognition of and emphasis on cinema's documentary qualities.

Other films in this period after the Russo-Japanese War were clearly premised on the special ability of film to record and report actuality thanks to the indexical qualities of the photographic image. For example, there were introductions to Japan's new colonies—films transporting Taiwan and Korea to the metropole for display in *An Introduction to the Actual Conditions in Taiwan* (Taiwan jikkyō shōkai; 1907) and *Around Korea* (Kankoku isshū; 1908). In 1910, cameraman Taizumi Yasunao accompanied Lieutenant Shirase Nobu on his expedition to the South Pole. *Japanese Expedition to the South Pole* (Nippon nankyoku tanken; 1910, released in 1912) is still extant, and the film impresses viewers even today. Because of its cinematography and editing (down to full-frontal introductions of all expedition members), Satō Tadao calls it the first documentary of any significance.[17] Tanaka Jun'ichirō goes so far as to regard it as the first documentary, probably because of its resemblance to Western documentaries on adventurous expeditions.[18] Entering the 1920s, many films were premised on the medium's ability to record and report actuality in a nonfictional mode; there were disaster films such as *Actuality of the Great Oil Geyser at Kurokawa Oil Fields, Akita Prefecture* (Akita-ken Kurokawa yuden daifun'yu jikkyō; 1923), spectacles of Tokyo from the air in *Tokyo before the Earthquake as Seen from an Airship* (Hikōsen ni yoru shinsaimae no Tokyo; 1923), and the famous footage by Shirai Shigeru of the massive 1923 earthquake that leveled Tokyo in *The Great Kantō Earthquake* (Kantō daishinsai; 1923). The film on the earthquake was created when the Ministry of Education decided that it would be appropriate to make a record of the quake. This was the ministry's entry into film production, a role that would become increasingly central in the next decade.[19]

One entire genre of films available for viewing today concerns the royal family. The content of these films has protected them from oblivion. They are interesting for their representation of the imperial household,

especially in light of the changes the conventions later underwent in the Shōwa era (after Crown Prince Hirohito became emperor in 1926). Many of these films of the Taishō era (1912–26) center on the prince and give the distinct impression he was being sold to the public.[20] Throughout this period, encouraging the citizenry of Japan to feel that they had a stake in the relatively new nation was an ongoing concern. Beginning with the founding of the nation-state under the wing of the emperor, and especially with the Imperial Rescript on Education, the government worked hard to stitch the nation together out of a chaos of local, religious, and emerging class identities.[21] Cinema was clearly a medium useful for evoking identification with the national symbol of the emperor, and we can see the prince being groomed publicly in these old documentaries. Later, when "assistance to imperial rule" was either automatic or enforced by threat of violence, the person of the emperor would be represented in exceedingly oblique ways. In these early films, however, he is treated less as a god than as a commodity. That is to say, in those days of dabbling in the fruits of modernism—jazz, the movies, and the energetic pitch of the city—the prince was portrayed in a modern (i.e., Western) mold. He was sent off on an official visit to Europe (England being the key stop, of course) to receive a Western stamp of approval. The news films shot on this trip emphasize an association of the imperial household with European-style monarchies. Cameramen from competing Japanese companies rushed exposed film stock—by transatlantic boat, by train across the continental United States, and then over a second expanse of ocean—back to the home islands. This elaborate race to show the films first completed the prince's commodification.

Other members of the imperial family received similar treatment. *His Highness Chichibunomiya Mountain Climbing* (Chichibunomiya Denka Tachiyama gotōzan; 1927), commissioned by the Education Ministry and stunningly photographed by Shirai Shigeru, follows Hirohito's brother into the northern Japan Alps. Throughout, he is photographed from a respectful distance, but hardly in a hyperbolic manner. In our first view of the royal brother, he squats on his doorstep tying his hiking boots. In the midst of a rock field, he munches on lunch and chats with his companions; later, he begins ascending an impressively steep peak. This kind of film was the foundation for Chichibu's public reputation as a sportsman. However, such more or less human portraits of the royal family completely disappeared in the 1930s.

By far the most significant of the imperial house films is *Actuality of His Excellency the Regent's Inspection of the Motion Picture Exhibition* (Sesshōnomiya Denka katsudō shashin tenrankai gotairan jikkyō; 1921). By the beginning of the 1920s, with the ceaseless expansion of the Japanese

film industry, many people began to worry about the new medium's effects on the nation's youth. The Education Ministry had already recognized the potential of motion pictures for the ministry's project of enlightened education of Japan's young citizens—arguably the most dangerous influence imaginable for film—and it sponsored a major exhibition of motion pictures at Ochanomizu Museum. The ministry hoped that its endorsement would calm fears, and to hedge its bet, it invited the prince to take a look.[22] The film shows the future emperor, just back from his European trip, leaving his car and entering the exhibition surrounded by a flock of attendants and photojournalists. He inspects a miniature set model used for a special effects explosion, then steps in front of a battery of movie cameras to watch the great actor Onoe Matsunosuke shoot *The Camphor Tree at Sakurai Station* (Kusunoki ko Sakurai no eki; 1921). The camera lingers on the prince, who strikes a dashing pose. Matsunosuke's performance goes virtually ignored, even though it is likely most spectators would much rather have watched the beloved actor at work than the prince standing motionless like an elegant garden statue.

The nonfiction films from the end of the Russo-Japanese War through to the 1920s straddled the line between reportage and the recording of spectacle and scenery (although this is arguably true for all journalism up to the present). In terms of form, they constitute what we usually call newsreels—silent, moving-image supplements to print journalism. Although the period between 1906 and the late 1920s was one of explosive growth for the mass media, nonfiction film lagged behind its print counterparts, especially newspapers. Most newsreels were produced through the sponsorship of newspaper companies or by small companies operated by entrepreneurs, and then only on an irregular basis. It should be pointed out, however, that the historical record favors a certain kind of film, and this probably skews our understanding of this early history. For example, Shirai's earthquake footage is celebrated in history books by virtue of the Education Ministry's participation, the film's wide distribution, and the fact that it is still extant, not to mention the prestige of its cameraman.[23] However, at least one other group made an earthquake film. This recently discovered footage was shot by employees of a movie theater in an adjacent prefecture. When they heard of the disaster that had wiped out the capital, they rushed to the scene with their movie camera and several rolls of film. They showed this film in their theater, and then it sat forgotten in storage for seventy years. The fact that by the early 1920s a minor movie theater had its own camera on hand indicates that there was already considerable filmmaking activity at the amateur level. By 1928, amateur enthusiasts had several small-gauge cameras and projectors to choose from

and were using them with some enthusiasm. Inspired by recently released films such as Walther Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (Berlin: Die Symphonie einer Grosstadt; 1927), the amateurs produced hundreds of films, held public exhibitions, published their own magazines, and participated in international amateur competitions. A significant portion of these amateur films were documentaries of one type or another, but almost none have survived.

Because so few films are extant, and those remaining are exceedingly difficult to access, most scholars have concentrated on the imperial house films and on newsreels describing important political events to the exclusion of the work by amateurs. Professional filmmakers were afforded glimpses of the developments in foreign documentary with the release of Robert J. Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), *Dark Congo* (1928), and *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City,* but their own work relied on the newsreel form. The major break from this limited conception of nonfiction came about because of the interest of a new sector of filmmakers outside of competitive journalism and the interests of the state, but deeply connected to the amateur film world; this proletarian film movement both experimented with form and explored the political potential of documentary. Rumblings of this step to a new level are evident in a well-known critical debate that flared in the pages of the film theory magazine *Eiga Zuihitsu* (Essays on cinema) in 1928.

Whither Cinema? Iwasaki versus Shimizu

The growing popularity of both left-wing art and the international avant-garde provided the backdrop for the controversy between Iwasaki Akira and the membership of the *dōjinshi Eiga Zuihitsu*. The *dōjinshi* is a form of publication that played a key role in the history of Japanese documentary and was particularly common in the arts. Essentially the self-published periodicals of groups of like-minded intellectuals *(dōjin),* these magazines provide today's film historians with useful access to the way film was being conceptualized at given movements by specific groups of thinkers. *Eiga Zuihitsu,* which was based in Kyoto, was devoted to the study of cinematic art. The intellectuals involved in its publication included Takeda Akira, Yamamoto Shūji, Fukase Motohiro, Nakano Koroyasu, Ezaki Shingo, and Kuse Kōtarō (Tanikawa Tetsuzō), but the two key members of this group were Kanō Ryūichi (Kanō Yūkichi) and Shimizu Hikaru. Kanō studied architecture and brought his interest in structure and space to his film theory. He would later come to be considered an important documentary

filmmaker, especially for his work on *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (1946). Shimizu approached cinema from the perspective of philosophy, and this provided a relatively academic tone to the discourse.[24] He is known primarily for introducing to Japan the writings of Moholy-Nagy, Leger, Vertov, and other representatives of the European avant-garde. All of these figures weave in and out of the subsequent history of documentary.

The debate to which I have referred above began when the writers of *Eiga Zuihitsu* invited the radical critic Iwasaki Akira to a semiformal chat called "Isseki Taku o Tomo ni Shite" (One night together at the table) in late 1927. We have some sense of what happened that evening because the conversation aroused enough controversy to be mentioned in the editor's column in the January 1928 issue of *Eiga Zuihitsu*.[25] Iwasaki was a young critic who had already begun to attract attention for his serious-minded film criticism; as we shall see, he would eventually become one of Japan's most interesting and outspoken film critics and historians, not to mention the creator of some of Japanese cinema's key documentaries. On that night around the *Eiga Zuihitsu* table, Iwasaki took the writers to task; he criticized their work as too "academic" and took exception to their orientation toward the cinematic equivalent of high art. As far as he was concerned, *Eiga Zuihitsu* did not care about film now *(genzai no eiga)* or about Japanese film *(Nihon no eiga)*. This criticism launched a serious discussion that continued long after that night. The backstage response was so explosive, the issues deemed so central, that the editors decided to air them with more clarity in the February 1928 issue. They asked Iwasaki to write down his thoughts, and they asked *dōjin* Shimizu Hikaru to act as respondent.[26]

In the resulting exchange, Iwasaki begins by apologizing for coming on too strong that night in Kyoto, joking that it must have been the sake. That said, he quickly turns serious. He zeros in on *Eiga Zuihitsu*'s focus on discovering the essence of cinema as being the main object of inquiry. For Iwasaki, conjuring something that embodies and defines the era and its social relations invariably involves refining a concept so narrowly that it becomes meaningless. In the end, this kind of concept does not actually exist. The word *essence* comes to hold meaning to the extent that it purifies a little, enriches, and promotes cinema. He offers a variation of the Platonic cave to illustrate his thinking:

> Please endure this childish metaphor. I am now thinking of a certain sundial. It tells time by the form cast on top of a disk by a single pole. Actually, it is a single pole. We should say this is the "essence" of this sundial. Furthermore, our interest and primary observation is certainly not with that single pole. Rather, it is regulated by the pole's shadow, the minute-by-minute change in

> the sun's position—the black shadow's waning, growing longer, and shorter again. This is to say, we are interested more in that "phenomenon." . . . In other words, what attracts my heart more than anything now is how the compass needle we know as cinema is the *present* silhouette thrown by the light of the revolving sun known as the external restrictions of the class system and social relations.[27]

This last comment reveals Iwasaki's politics, but his parable of shadow-casting devices—the sundial, the cinema—also indicates an attitude that demands an accounting of the whole, a grounding of thought in the world. Those who gaze only at the shadows ignore the play of parts and how they make meaning in time and space. Iwasaki calls this his "eiga bigaku izen," which might be translated as "the preconditions of a film aesthetics."

Respondent Shimizu Hikaru calls it "a theory of negating film aesthetics" and "a theory of the uselessness of film aesthetics." He meticulously counterattacks Iwasaki, very nearly sentence by sentence, offering a response that is considerably more detailed and subtle than Iwasaki's clunky parable. Defending *Eiga Zuihitsu*'s project of undertaking an aesthetics for cinema, he emphasizes his group's insistence on avoiding an aesthetics of standardization or the establishment of criteria. He concludes that it is a pity Iwasaki cannot recognize the group's concern for "film now" or "Japan's cinema."

Shimizu was no dilettante confined to the salon. In the coming decade he and other *Eiga Zuihitsu dōjin* would be active in the Popular Front. Their predilections were for a radically new aesthetic for this unique art form, and they looked to Le Corbusier, Moholy-Nagy, and Dziga Vertov for inspiration. For his part, Iwasaki is the best representative of an emergent group whose members were primarily concerned with ideology theory and class struggle, an identity that took the adjective *proletarian* as its rallying point.[28]

The brief debate between Shimizu and Iwasaki represents a microcosm of intellectual life poised between the cosmopolitan liberalism of the 1920s and what Leslie Pincus calls the "fascist turn in critical discourse."[29] Its two major participants took two orientations to cinema developing in the margins of the feature film as their starting point. Shimizu valorized the thrilling modernism of the European avant-garde film, and Iwasaki was leading the way toward a radically politicized cinema. Articulations of these two orientations would run through the film world's left wing until at least the early 1960s, when strikingly similar debates swirled around the presence of such figures as Matsumoto Toshio.[30] Significantly, there is also a geographic angle to the *Eiga Zuihitsu* controversy at the close of the 1920s: Shimizu and Iwasaki were, in some sense, serving as representatives

of Kyoto and Tokyo, respectively. These regional identities underlie their disagreement, adding a layer of complexity to the debate. This surfaced once again in the next decade as state-sponsored violence against the leftist intellectuals intensified. The fact that their heated discussion took place at all, let alone their public airing of its substance, indicates their sense that they had a stake in these aesthetic and political issues bearing down on the cinema. The pressure created by this type of discussion—there were many others like it occurring both on- and offstage[31]—was one of a multiplicity of factors that led to the first grand experiment in Japanese documentary: the proletarian film movement known as Prokino.

[2] *The Innovation of Prokino*

Sasa knew his film was no masterpiece, but . . .
:: Iwasaki Akira, *Nihon Eiga Shishi,* 1977

The proletarian film movement's originary moment came in 1927, when a May Day parade was photographed on 9.5mm film by the Trunk Theater.[1] The theater troupe's film unit amounted to a single member, a young film enthusiast by the name of Sasa Genjū.

To understand the proletarian film movement, we must detour through the larger political backdrop, for each ideological battle within the left sent repercussions through the whole of the proletarian culture movement. The 1910s and 1920s marked a growing politicization of the working classes in Japan; farmers had older precedents for organizing politically in the Freedom and People's Rights Movement (1874–90), which pressured those in power to create a parliament and constitution. Early in the twentieth century, new groups formed around political interests: women and the Seitōsha (Bluestocking Society), the Buraku Emancipation Movement's Suiheisha (Leveling Society), the Shinjinkai (New Man Society), and a proliferation of workers' unions and political action groups. In 1917 there were eighty-five strikes and demonstrations; by 1927 there were more than two thousand, involving nearly two hundred thousand people.

Those interested in politicizing the arts also began to organize. The proletarian culture movement, like the party movement, was fractured by competing ideologies and characterized by frequent splits and mergers.[2] For example, the first art organization, the Nihon Puroretaria Bungei Renmei (Japan Proletarian Literary Arts League), formed around the literary magazine *Bungei Sensen* (Literary arts front) in 1925; the next year, it changed its name to Nihon Puroretaria Geijutsu Renmei (Japan Proletarian Arts League, or Progei), declaring Marxism the basis of its thinking and

expunging anarchists, syndicalists, and other strains of the left. This was a reflection of the reestablishment of the Communist Party under Fukumotoism in December 1926. Fukumoto Kazuo was the leading theorist of the party at the end of the 1920s. He stressed the necessity of a strong theoretical foundation over practical means and experience, leading to the rooting out of "false" Marxists. Fukumotoism's devotion to theoretical questions was in contrast to the older Yamakawaism (based on the leadership of Yamakawa Hitoshi), which pragmatically emphasized contact with the masses and concrete sociopolitical development. These two orientations constituted structures for intellectual life and determined the shape of the proletarian film movement. Indeed, this general discursive structure probably informs the *Eiga Zuihitsu* debate (discussed in chapter 1) at some level, with Iwasaki playing Yamakawa to Shimizu's Fukumoto.[3]

With its new name and orientation, Progei structured itself by artistic domain: literature, theater, art, and music. At this early date, no one thought to include motion pictures. Within a year, the group split on the basis of a theoretical debate over the "consciousness of purpose" *(mokuteki ishiki)* of the arts. Battle lines were drawn between those who stressed the independence of the literary movement and the importance of writing as art (Hayashi Fusao, Aono Suekichi) and a group of student activists who admired Fukumoto (Kaji Wataru, Nakano Shigeharu). The former group left to form the Rōnō Geijutsuka Renmei (Worker-Farmer Artists League, or Rōgei), which only months later split once again over the Fukumoto-Yamakawa problem in the wake of the Comintern's 1927 thesis, which criticized Fukumotoism. This split produced a third organization: the Zen'ei Geijutsuka Dōmei (Vanguard Artists League).

Coinciding with this organizational warfare, the workers at the Hakubunkan Press in Tokyo staged a large-scale strike in 1926. Conditions were extremely difficult, and the union was eventually defeated. However, the strike was significant in two respects. Not only was it the model for Tokunaga Sunao's *Taiyō no Nai Machi* (Street without sunshine), a landmark of the proletarian literature movement, it also provided the theater section of Progei an opportunity to push theory into practice. Members of this section took the name Trunk Theater, packed their bags, and stepped out of the proscenium arch and into the swirl of activity at the strike. There, in the midst of a difficult labor action, they provided entertainment for the protesting workers. Now that theater could fit into a trunk, it could go anywhere. This emphasis on mobility and entering the daily lives of workers—clearly a strain of Yamakawaism—provided the kernel of an idea for the establishment of the film movement to come.

One of the Trunk Theater members was Sasa, who studied French lit-

erature at Tokyo University. A cinema lover, Sasa began writing film criticism for left-wing magazines and eventually established the film unit of the Trunk Theater. To be specific, the film unit consisted of nothing other than the solitary efforts of Sasa himself. He possessed a Pathé Baby 9.5mm camera, and he began integrating the use of that camera into his work with the proletarian arts movement. The short films he produced in 1927 and 1928 were shown as added attractions at the Trunk Theater's performances. Sasa made four films under the troupe's banner: *1927 Tokyo May Day* (1927 nen Tokyo Mē Dē; 1927), *Tokyo University News* (Teidai nyūsu; 1927), *On the Street* (Gaitō; 1927), and *Actuality of the Noda Shōyu Strike* (Noda Shōyu sōgi jikkyō; 1928). None of these films, unfortunately, are extant today.

However, Sasa's description of his trip to the Noda strike survives in a 1931 issue of *Puroretaria Eiga* (Proletarian film).[4] More than 1,358 of 2,092 Kikkōman workers at Noda walked off the job in the fall of 1927 and endured a long, cold winter off the job. They closed sixteen of nineteen plants until April of the following year, making it the longest strike in Japanese history up to that time.[5] On 4 March 1928, Sasa simply turned up at Noda without any advance notice and shot atmospheric scenes of a town in the midst of a labor action. He stumbled upon a demonstration in which workers stole company vehicles and formed a parade. On the sidelines of the parade he met union organizers, who welcomed him and his project and put him up for the night. Sasa had a list of items he wanted to shoot around the periphery of the strike, but his trip coincided with a blizzard, making life difficult for both filmmaker and strikers. He was unsure his little camera could work in such dim light, but he shot what he could. After two days he returned to Tokyo to develop and edit the footage.

Later, Sasa brought his finished film back to Noda and screened it for the strikers. Because of the inclement weather, low light, and low-tech nature of the production, the film was not particularly beautiful. However, the workers were thrilled by what they saw. Some parts they watched silently and attentively; at other times they recognized faces on the screen and burst out in laughter or catcalls. When the lights went up, Sasa got an ovation that would not stop until he showed the film again. Sasa knew his film was no masterpiece, but that such a slight film provoked such enthusiastic response taught him the extraordinary potential of cinema for *moving* masses of people. With today's saturation of imagery, it is easy for us to underestimate the powerful experience of seeing one's culture—oneself—on a movie screen in 1928.

These kinds of screenings with the Trunk Theater led Sasa to write a manifesto in the pages of the magazine *Senki* (Battle flag) in the summer

of 1928, words that subsequently formed the ideological basis of Prokino. It is a short piece, but it started a movement. Sasa's article is titled "Gangu/Buki—Satsueiki" (Camera—toy/weapon).[6] Despite being all of five pages long, it makes for stirring reading, even today. Sasa's prose has a quality reminiscent of Vertov's essays, using neologisms, incomplete sentences, and a heady patchwork of ideas filled with brazen, burn-all-bridges criticism, all set in varying typefaces and type sizes. Although scathing, Sasa's words have a kind of swaggering charm. The article opens with a rousing attack on bourgeois cineasts:

> First, the old-style cinema fans . . . the old-style fans from the time of Japan's first "theatrical films." With their various magazines for the industry, they were simply parasites of all the studios and import companies, or you could call them literary *[bunshōteki]* sandwich-board men. Next, these modern film people—cinema is art, and they are cineasts. . . . They feel unlimited pride *just for this*. The group that embraces a flood of nineteenth-century-style hatred toward mediocre cinémathetes.[7]

Sasa points his readers in a different direction—"Let us exclude these archaeologists, professional jesters, highbrow scholars, pessimists, and libertines of the cinema kingdom and their ilk and look at the role of the cineast and its reality."[8] He identifies a group of new critics who deserve admiration and attention, for their critical endeavor is highly politicized. Through their writing and translation, these critics introduce their readers to the *kikōsei,* or what might be termed the "mechanically constructed nature," of the movies. Although none of them has ever stepped on a set, they describe the nuts and bolts of filmmaking—"camera, camera angle, pan, light, cutting tempo, time and space, movement, double exposure, overlap, flashback, machine/director/technique, the phenomenon of editing, etc. etc." Sasa calls them pioneers who, only thirty years after the invention of the machine, fought for a new film theory, a new film practice, a new worldview. With this glowing praise, Sasa abruptly twists and pounces:

> We've heard about correct theory and criticism from these so-called cineasts. What I find regretful is that they are sitting at their desks, they're such cineasts; it's an abstract vicious circle—it will be nothing but thought for thought's sake. After all, their critique never leaves its own sphere which follows left-wing thought. They are drafters of "waste paper" and "nonsense" in their own camp.
>
> You true film critics of class! Your pens must be razor-sharp weapons from end to end.
>
> Without this struggle, you who simply, uselessly, list up pretty "left-wing" words, you are nothing but a despicable clown who feeds on the proletariat. You are nothing but one ugly traitor.[9]

Here Sasa arrives at the crux of his little manifesto. He calls on these "class cineasts" to leave their desks and go out into the world. The tool for putting their terms and knowledge into action is right in front of them, and that tool is the amateur camera. He holds up the example of the 9.5mm Pathé Baby. This was the camera of choice for amateur enthusiasts of small-gauge cinema *(kogata eiga),* what was often called baby cinema. Scarcely larger than one's hand, this was the bourgeois toy of the essay's title, the harmless home movie machine Sasa appropriated as a weapon of class struggle. The Pathé Baby was first imported to Japan in 1924 and became the standard equipment for amateur film enthusiasts. Prices for film stock and equipment were high, and the technical challenges of photography, developing, and editing required that users have substantial leisure time. This meant that the lively independent film scene that developed around this equipment also involved a culture of class.

A readily available moving-image record of the amateur movie and its class character may be found in Ozu's *I Was Born, But . . .* (Umareta wa mita keredo; 1932). Ozu's feature film portrays power relations between the owner of a company and his workers and maps the class relations of the characters at a movie screening at the boss's home. When the children of the main character see their father clowning for the boss's *kogata* camera, they immediately lose all respect for their family, and the movie's comedy and politics proceed from there. The home movies in *I Was Born, But . . .* look amateurish, but many of the films in the competitive *kogata* film culture were accomplished experimental films along the lines of those produced by the European avant-garde. In this time period immediately preceding the formation of Prokino, the "city symphony" was one of the most popular forms for ambitious amateur moviemakers, inspired as they were by the Japanese release of *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* in 1927.[10]

Sasa's "Camera—Toy/Weapon" calls on readers to wrench the amateur film from the upper classes and take it to the factories and farms. He describes the "germinal project" he undertook at the Trunk Theater and assures readers that although there are technological limits to the *kogata* camera, it is capable of every trick in the standard-gauge repertoire. Most important—the forked path before the proletarian filmmaker—the use of the Pathé Baby projector determines whether or not the films can enter the daily lives of the working class.[11]

> At the Left-Wing Theater Film Unit, we are making films and bringing them into daily life. Then we, with other class cineasts, will critique and subjugate the moneyed cinematic art, include films in the fight against the despotic, tyrannical pressure on cinema, and expect to unify to make films in an organized manner for the liberation of the proletariat, bringing films into their



Figure 2. A young girl photographs her bourgeois family in an advertisement for *kogata* cameras. Only the wealthy could afford this toy. From *Amachyua Mūbisu* (Amateur movies), October 1928.

daily life. Our films at the present stage should awaken class consciousness, explore the facets of today's society, and truly root out various social contradictions.

The unorganized masses will become conscious participants. The orga-

> nized masses will understand their will to fight, and must make films with unceasing effort.
>
> Now, the road for our producing films, fulfilling objective and economic conditions, is nothing other than an extreme photorealism. It is a *Sur-realisme*.[12]

Most people have interpreted this *sur-realisme* to mean a brand of documentaryism, but we must give Sasa plenty of room to play. He is coming to this project through his study of the French avant-garde, and, judging from the list he offers of all the special effects possible with the Pathé Baby, he appears to be interested in experimental filmmaking. Be that as it may, the tantalizing *sur-realisme* he envisioned and the films he came to make were probably quite different in quality. Sasa ends "Camera—Toy/Weapon" with descriptions of the Trunk Theater films, a plea for contributions, and a clarion call for readers to join in proletarian film *acts*.

The impact of Sasa's electric style and singular innovation in "Camera—Toy/Weapon" started a film movement. Iwasaki Akira tells why:

> This short article, if you exaggerate slightly, was a "Copernican Revolution." The conversation between Lenin and Lunacharsky in which they say film is our most important art is something we had already known about. "That's right," we thought. Even so, I left literature (my major in college) and entered cinema. However, the Soviet Union was the country that established the Soviet kind of socialism, and through their work proved the possibility of the real importance of production. In capitalist countries, we thought there was no other method possible outside of counteracting, restricting and analyzing films as intellectual rebels *[hanmenkyōshi]* (although there was no such word in those days, of course), through writing theory and criticism about the individual films coming from the capitalist film industry whose massive output is thought of as product. We published film journals and presented our writing on the stage of magazines and newspapers. Filmmaking required major capital. When the proletariat took power is when cinema would belong to the proletariat. Until then, our weapon was the pen and paper. That is what we believed.[13]

Through Sasa's article, the proletariat discovered that *kogata* equipment put the means of production within the reach of anyone, regardless of the political system he or she happened to be living under. But Sasa's article did not emerge in a vacuum. At the time it was written, there was already a "proletarian film movement" that had a number of organizations representing it (or competing to lead it).[14] This included labor unions such as the Eiga Jūgyōin Kumiai (Film Workers Union), the Eiga Setsumeisha Renmei (Federation of Film Narrators), the Zenkoku Eiga Jūgyōin Dōmei (All-Japan Film Employee's League, or Zen'ei), the film branch of the Kantō General Salaried Workers Union (Kantō Ippan Hōkyūsha Kumiai), the Zen Nihon Eiga Jūgyōin Kumiai (All-Japan Salaried Film Employees

Union), and the film section of the Rōdō Kumiai Hyōgikai (Labor Union Council). There were also groups organized based on related concerns, such as the Ken'etsu Seido Kaisei Kisei Dōmei (Association for the Promotion of Revision of the Censorship System).

Another development was the popularization of so-called proletarian film criticism, which made itself felt in a variety of magazines, such as *Eichō* (The cinema current), *Eiga Ōrai* (Film traffic), *Eiga Zuihitsu,* and *Eiga Hyōron* (Film review). Paging through the issues of any of these journals, one can see the proletarian turn occur in midstream. For example, *Eichō* started in the form of a slim pamphlet in 1924 as a *dōjinshi* for criticism and scenarios. By the third volume in early 1927, two of the key members of the group publishing the magazine, Kishi Matsuo and Minami Seihei, started to turn left as it became a thick and smartly designed journal. Their treatment of Charlie Chaplin, for example, emphasized the class aspects of the Little Tramp character and the way he was ridiculed and discriminated against.

The most important of all the groups representing this emergent identity was the Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Renmei (Proletarian Film Federation of Japan), which grew out of journals very similar to *Eichō,* such as *Eiga no Eiga* (Film essence), which started up in November 1927 as the *dōjinshi* for a group studying Chaplin. According to *dōjin* Kishi Matsuo, the group was a loose assembly of film fans that met once or twice a month to discuss film culture after the earthquake that leveled Tokyo in 1923.[15] They produced *Eiga no Eiga* simply because they wanted their own magazine. The first two issues reflect the multiple perspectives of the *dōjin,* but the fans with leftist tendencies came to the fore with a third issue exploring proletarian film. This caused tensions within the group that led to its breakup, and the issue was reorganized—along with its writers—into a new *dōjinshi* called *Eiga Kaihō* (Film liberation) that had an overt political agenda.

Around the same time, another politicized collective produced the journal *Eiga Kōjō* (Film factory), a *dōjinshi* devoted to the study of scenarios. Most of the contributions were original scripts that had been solicited, all of which had leftist themes and some of which had experimental qualities. For example, "Kōshin" (Parade), which appeared in the March 1928 issue, was a Moholy-Nagy–like graphic meant to chart the flow of a scenario about a clash between police and demonstrators.[16] The orientation of *Eiga Kōjō* is clear from a "declaration" published in the March 28 issue.[17] It is obvious the *dōjin* perceived their activities as belonging to a "movement," granting the disconnected, individual efforts that constituted it. This is to say, the proletarian film movement was splintered and distributed among the organizations listed above. The *Eiga Kōjō* declaration ends

with a call for the production of films, followed by a quick retreat: we should make films, but we have no money, and they won't let us through their tyrannical censorship apparatus. Therefore,

> as a whole, we look from the objective conditions first, and we must open a merciless struggle against the existing film world which is saturated by bourgeois ideology. Speaking more concretely, and put more prescriptively, the intelligentsia of the present film world who hold a vanguard perspective—constituted by critics, scenario writers, directors, so-called high-class fans and the like—are who we must face. And while we bravely fight we must endeavor to take their struggle into our own camp. . . . Finally, the objective of the struggle facing us should be primarily the intelligentsia of the film world. This kind of struggle is necessarily the long road we must travel for the actual emergence of a proletarian cinema. However, as a method, as a weapon, what should we use to execute such a struggle? What epitomizes the general object of the struggle must be, above all, film theory and the scenario itself.[18]

This is a perfect expression of Fukumotoism and its emphasis on the theoretical mastery of the intellectual vanguard. It was a view shared by the people at *Eiga Kaihō,* which is acknowledged in a short addendum to the *Eiga Kōjō* declaration. This afterword notes that Kishi and Hazumi Tsuneo had formed a new organization called the Proletarian Film Federation of Japan, and that they had invited the *Eiga Kōjō* writers to join. Because it made sense to combine forces—and there was no need for two magazines—this would be the last issue of *Eiga Kōjō.* The February/March 1928 issue of *Eiga Kaihō* acknowledges this discussion about amalgamation, the creation of the Federation, and the support of a few, as yet unnamed, famous film critics.[19]

The two journals were folded into each other, and in June the first edition of *Puroretaria Eiga* was released: "This inaugural issuing of *Puroretaria Eiga*—It is the official organ of the Proletarian Film Federation of Japan! The left-wing film struggle can occur right here. Look! We are throwing away our old petit bourgeois attitudes from the steamship of the struggle!"[20] However, the fact that the journal's ideological orientation within the left was the same as *Eiga Kōjō*'s is evidenced by the publication in *Puroretaria Eiga* of the earlier declaration with virtually no revision.[21]

The *Puroretaria Eiga* group's Fukumotoist position stood in fairly stark opposition to the approach of Sasa Genjū, who was beginning to show his films around Japan at precisely this time.[22] The August/September 1928 issue notes the publication of Sasa's "Camera—Toy/Weapon" in an article by Takida Izuru titled "The Road to Proletarian Film."[23] Takida buries Sasa's idea of bringing cameras into the daily lives of the masses among the planks of a broad agenda for a proletarian film movement.

Before this is at all possible, he argues, filmmakers must first develop cinematic techniques based on theoretical inquiry into aesthetics and psychology, and—more than anything—start with the scenario. Sasa, who dispensed with such theorizing as a prerequisite or foundational starting point, was referring precisely to these Federation critics when he ravaged those "desk-bound drafters of wastepaper." However, in the very same issue of *Puroretaria Eiga,* the editorial foreword raises the issue of amalgamation with Sasa's Film Unit. The editorial positions the Federation as the organization "known to all" as embodying the proletarian film movement, and one senses frustration on the part of the publishers of *Puroretaria Eiga*—that NAPF was invading their territory and there was little they could do but merge the two groups.[24] This they did, but they took their frustration with them as baggage, as the Yamakawaism of Sasa's group became the orientation of Prokino. This built a fractious contradiction into the fabric of the movement.

This tension is mostly invisible in the documents left to history, especially given that the self-image Prokino members projected into the world largely suppressed this complex prehistory.[25] When it does get mentioned, as in Kamimura Shūkichi's "History of the Development of Japanese Proletarian Cinema," it is laced with the same venom one finds in Sasa's article. The standard postwar history of Prokino by Namiki does little more than quote Kamimura and Sasa's vicious attacks on the Federation.[26] The most visibly rendered marks of the ideological tension within Prokino are from asides written by Hazumi and Kishi some years after the suppression of the movement. In his 1937 collection of film criticism, Kishi disavows his own participation as a Prokino member:

> In spite of the Communist Party arrests on 15 March 1928 and 16 April 1929, the proletarian film movement intensified to a new level. The Proletarian Federation of Japan dissolved and the Proletarian Film League of Japan formed, and in May of the following year the first proletarian films were released at Yomiuri Hall. However, by about this time, I was disgusted with such openly left-wing criticism. I had a monthly film column in *Eiga Ōrai,* and I attempted to establish a new style of film criticism. It received a favorable response from some people, but the left-*X* instantly attacked me as petit bourgeois and branded me a traitor.[27]

Hazumi was also a leader of *Eiga Kaihō* and the Federation. Unlike Kishi, Takida Izuru, and other *dōjin,* he seems to have avoided Prokino altogether. His 1942 book *Eiga Gojūnenshi* (Fifty years of film history) is sprinkled with personal anecdotes and comments that interrupt the smooth flow of the historical narrative. One of these textual intrusions is striking

for its bitter tone. It comes at the end of a chapter on the Soviet cinema and Japan's "tendency film":[28]

> I must let it be known that I have left something big out. That is the movement of Prokino (Proletarian Film League of Japan), which occurred during the period of the tendency film's rise to fame. They worked energetically in activism and criticism. . . . However, I have no interest in writing more about them in any detail. There was probably the enthusiasm of youth. There was probably heroism. However, beyond this, can we find any meaning for today within this movement? What there is is the wildness of the era, the rashness of youth. Outside of that it was nothing. In those days, I myself was a sympathizer and got caught up in this crazy atmosphere. With the presence of mind that comes with the passing of time, we must keep that movement and film history separate in our thinking. I purposefully left this out.[29]

This bitter dismissal of Prokino does not appear in postwar revised editions of Hazumi's book.

There is also a larger institutional context predating—and precipitating—the formation of Prokino. The new ideas spawned by Sasa's writing and filmmaking coincided with shifts in the political landscape. After the Comintern published its 1927 theses criticizing the "Japan Problem," particularly the Japan Communist Party's wrangling over Yamakawaism and Fukumotoism, Kurahara Korehito called for a unification of the movement in the pages of Zengei's journal *Zen'ei* (Vanguard). In January 1928, the Japan Proletarian Arts League and Vanguard Artists League began talks about a merger, and on 13 March, these and other groups formally combined into the Nihon Sayoku Bungeika Sōrengō (Japanese Federation of Left-Wing Literary Artists). However, two days after this inaugural meeting the government cracked down on the Communist Party in what would become known as the March 15 Incident. Some twelve hundred suspected party members were arrested, seven hundred were interrogated, and five hundred were indicted. Police stormed residences and the offices of more than fifty left-wing organizations, confiscating thousands of documents (among them, a list of party members).[30] There was chaos in the leftist arts community in the wake of these arrests; among those imprisoned were many of the community's leaders. The various artists' groups (now up to at least eight in number), judging this to be a time for the relative safety of solidarity, unified under the name Zen Nippon Musansha Geijutsu Renmei (All Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts), or NAPF, after the initials of its Esperanto name, Nippona Artista Proleta Federacio. *Senki* (Battle flag) was the organization's official magazine. NAPF was structured according to artistic field into four domains: Sakka Dōmei (NARP) for literature,

Bijutsuka Dōmei (AR) for painting and the plastic arts, Ongakka Dōmei (PM) for music, and Gekijō Dōmei (Purotto) for theater. Within the latter, Sasa's lonely film unit was renamed Sayoku Gekijō Eigahan (Left-Wing Theater Film Unit).[31] Thanks to Sasa's June publication of "Camera—Toy/Weapon," the film unit attracted new members. With people such as Iwasaki Akira and Nakajima Shin joining forces, Sasa was no longer alone.

On 2 February 1929, the film unit separated from Purotto and became an independent organ within NAPF.[32] The members of the new group called themselves Nippon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Proletarian Film League of Japan), or Prokino for short.[33] At their opening organizational meeting, they concluded by adopting the following four slogans:

> Fight for the production of proletarian cinema!
> Fight to critique and conquer all reactionary cinema!
> Fight to abolish the political oppression included in cinema!
> Strengthen and enlarge the Prokino organization![34]

As with any discussion of a convoluted history, a periodization of Prokino's development is useful. I borrow the following periodization from Prokino's Kamimura Shūkichi, who included it in an article in 1932 (only three years into the movement). Kamimura cites the Trunk Theater and Left-Wing Theater days as Prokino's first, organizational period:

1. 1927–February 1929, *formative period:* Sasa Genjū's preliminary work results in the establishment of Prokino as an independent identity.
2. 1929–March 1930, *journalistic period:* From establishment of the organization to the second convention; occasional efforts at film-making, but most energy poured into impressive publications.
3. 1930–April 1931, *filmmaking period:* Between the second and third conventions; a shift to a new emphasis on film production.
4. 1931–May 1932, *bolshevization period:* Between the third and fourth conventions; a focus on the popularization of the movement.[35]

Since the time of Kamimura's writing in 1932, we must add fifth and sixth items to conclude the periodization:

5. May 1932–Spring 1934, *suppression period:* After the interruption of the fourth national meeting, police pressure forces Prokino to dissolve.

6. 1934–46, *dissolution:* Members retreat to nonpolitical professions or quietly spread into every nook and cranny of the film world.

In the second period inaugurated by the official formation of Prokino, the group concentrated on establishing credible publications. Members began sporadic film production, holding screenings in major population centers. However, they were more productive with their criticism. Perhaps the obstacles to writing seemed less severe than those associated with filmmaking. The capital-intensive art of cinema lends itself to Marxist theorization and critique, and there was also the long-standing precedent of the *dōjinshi.* Furthermore, Prokino's early critical work already had precedent in the magazines of the Proletarian Film Federation of Japan. Prokino members have suppressed this prehistory up to the present day, but their occasional mention of the Federation reveals a desire to stake out their ideological territory in relation to these precursors.

Initially, members' own critical writings centered on Prokino's periodical, *Shinkō Eiga,* although they also published pamphlets and hefty books such as *Puroretaria Eiga no Chishiki* (Proletarian film and knowledge), *Puroretaria Eiga Undō no Tenbō* (Prospects of the proletarian film movement), and *Puroretaria Eiga Undō Riron* (Theory of the proletarian film movement).[36] These books were comparable to textbook introductions to every aspect of cinema, presented with a foregrounded political consciousness. However, *Shinkō Eiga*—and its renamed successors *Puroretaria Eiga, Purokino,* and *Puroretaria Eiga* (No. 2)—was filled with an impressive variety of criticism pitched at many different levels. Prokino writers' curiosity about the world is still palpable in their journal articles on how cameras work, translations of foreign criticism, reports from colonies such as Taiwan, studies of the censorship system, and much more, always circulating between the practical and the theoretical.[37]

At least six themes run through the pages of Prokino's journals: (1) the technical aspects of cinema and how to make films; (2) reinterpretation of the history of cinema; (3) attempts to push the film world in positive directions through critique; (4) analysis of the state of the industry intended to help readers understand the enemy thoroughly; (5) expansion of the scope of Prokino's movement internationally through personal contact, foreign reports, and translations; and (6) the fight against censorship, high ticket prices, militarism in cinema, and the like. The last item constituted a field in which Prokino members could bring a practical, activist aspect to their critical activities. In its second, journalistic period, Prokino attempted to organize the critics of the Japanese film world, regardless of their political affiliations. The first official meeting of the Film Critics Association was

held in February 1930, with Mori Iwao as leader and a membership of twenty-nine critics.[38] In a statement of purpose, the association declared, "As a core objective, we expect to advance the improvement of the film world in general, by unifying criticism, uniting film critics both through mutual aid among members and close contact, along with carrying out film criticism and other general affairs."[39] The group began studying the censorship problem as well as a range of other issues, from the high price of tickets to the government's relationship to the film industry. As it happened, the organization lasted only five months. With everyone from government censors to left-wing activists to film critics retained by studios thrown together in a fragile coalition, Prokino's role may have been too overwhelming to maintain the group in increasingly turbulent times.

As for Prokino's own criticism, the volumes of its publications contain a wealth of precious materials. For example, the special section on Korea in the March 1931 issue represents some of the only documentation of this movement in any language. Prokino criticism left historians a well-rounded view of the film world of the left in this period. Murayama Tomoyoshi's "Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi" (A history of the development of Japanese cinema) provides a typical vision of film history from the perspective of the movement.[40] It is primarily an industrial history, focusing on the economic aspects of the cinema. For example, when Murayama notes the establishment of a studio or production company, he invariably lists the amount of capital investment the venture required. He emphasizes the increasingly close relationship between the government and the budding industry, first through the negative force of censorship and then through active participation of government organs such as the Ministry of Education and the military in the sponsorship of conferences, film days, libraries, traveling film packages, and finally direct production assistance. Far from seeing these developments as support, Murayama saw them as the state leeching into the film world.

The Prokino writers subjected all aspects of the cinema to analysis and critique. They often criticized the tendency film for, as Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino would later write of 1960s European art cinema, being "trapped in the fortress."[41] The avant-garde received no less harsh an assessment. Iwasaki called it a phenomenon of ideological struggle. He asserted that the artists of the avant-garde—far from offering society any serious challenges—used "art" as an amulet or charm to escape from the realities of ideology.[42] Sasa brought "art" under a slightly different critique; whereas Iwasaki accused artists of running from ideology, Sasa saw artists as ultimately nothing more than shills for business.[43] Sasa (the French avant-garde fan) argued that it was a matter of function, not form or con-

tent; filmmakers must put the latter two into a dialectical relationship if proletarian criticism and filmmaking are to develop productively. The Prokino thinkers dealt with many of the themes and issues that post-1968 filmmakers and critics in the West would explore half a century later. Put in the most general terms (and *their* language), the ruling classes own and control film production, and the accumulation of capital is a premise of the cinema because of this—as is the use of high technology and fine quality—because it squeezes low-tech alternatives from the film world. Capital controls the power to regulate exhibition, and the censorship system also cannot be separated from its hands. Through the interlinkage of all these factors, film comes to embody capitalist ideology.

"All arts are vessels of ideology," writes Iwasaki, "and cinema is ideology in the form of an obi made of 35mm film."[44] This statement appears as an epigraph on his 1930 article "Eiga/Ideorojii" (Cinema/ideology). It is an interesting metaphor, as an obi is a long belt that winds around a kimono, holding everything in a beautiful package that envelops the body. In this article, Iwasaki offers his own periodization of film history: ten years earlier cinema was a "popular entertainment," five years earlier it became "business," three years before it was "art," and now it was "ideology." Many people had noticed film's potential as a tool of enlightenment and political action, but they did not pay much attention to it, let alone fully exploit it. Such exploitation only began with the formation of Prokino and spread to the film world at large. (Actually, as I have noted, the government showed an interest in cinema, but its serious, organized effort to exploit cinema did not begin until the 1930s.) For the Prokino critics, the development of cinema climaxed with their movement. Now it was up to the Prokino filmmakers to offer an alternative in film*making*.

I do not want to leave the impression that no film production was taking place immediately after the formation of Prokino. Indeed, within months the Tokyo and Kyoto branches of Prokino had made three of their first films, recording the funerals of assassinated labor leaders Yamamoto Senji and Watanabe Seinosuke: *Yamamoto Senji's Farewell Ceremony* (Yamasen kokubetsushiki; 1929), *Yamamoto Senji/Watanabe Seinosuke Worker Funeral* (Yamasen/Tosei rōdoshasō; 1929), and *Yamamoto Senji's Worker-Farmer Funeral* (Yamasen rōnōsō; 1929). The last film, made by Kyoto's branch of Prokino, is still extant. It is a respectful, moving record of what took place when mourners greeted the body of Yamamoto at Kyoto Station (with some famous faces in the crowd). The film follows the procession to Yamamoto's home. In addition to these short films, May Day celebrations were shot in Kanazawa by the local Prokino branch. May Day records would become a genre of leftist documentary unto itself

through to the postwar period—with, of course, a slight interruption in the late 1930s and early 1940s.[45] Although these were important first films, they were still sporadic efforts.

Prokino's first concerted effort to make films on a relatively large scale was the result of a shift in emphasis inaugurated at the organization's second convention on 5 April 1930. This new direction in Prokino's third period was partly a response to criticism, both from outside the group and from within. In the NAPF magazine *Senki,* novelist Nakano Shigeharu criticized Prokino as the least active league in NAPF. Members themselves wanted to emphasize film production, so they signaled the shift by changing the name of *Shinkō Eiga* to *Puroretaria Eiga*. They also adopted four new slogans:

> Take proletarian film to the factories and farms!
> Expand and strengthen the Prokino organization!
> Establish everyday production of proletarian film and organization of screenings!
> Toward total freedom for showing proletarian films![46]

With this institutional push from the second convention, Prokino applied itself to film production. Of course, up to this point, filmmakers in the mainstream film industry had already been producing their own version of proletarian cinema in so-called tendency films. However, Prokino critics frequently attacked this genre. Leftist films produced in the confines of the studio system had limits, so it was difficult for Prokino to consider them proletarian films. Thus the *tendency* moniker: if directors displayed a certain tendency in their thought, the extent to which they embodied that thought in their films was questionable.[47] Prokino was quick to point this out. Furthermore, the movement's mission to bring cinema (making and watching) into the daily lives of the working class also implied some degree of reliance on a documentary method. At the same time, the efforts of the tendency film directors were welcomed by Prokino's members, as was their material assistance. Studio directors such as Kimura Sotoji and Mizoguchi Kenji were Prokino sympathizers and appeared on the fringes of the movement. Because they worked within the studio system and relied completely on the framework of the capitalist industry, they had to respect the concerted independence and integrity of Prokino, and they offered considerable support in the forms of time, money, and equipment.[48]

This was vital patronage, as Prokino was determined to remain free from the conditions attached to capital. Members basically worked without pay, and because only a couple of them possessed the means to support

themselves (such as Iwasaki Akira with his popular criticism), many of the filmmakers lived communally. There was no need for camera rental; in addition to Sasa's Pathé Baby, Iwasaki purchased a CineKodak BB with his writing fees and, together with Kanda Kazuo (who borrowed cash from his family), also bought a Palbo L 35mm camera. The still photography section also borrowed one of the four Leicas existing in Japan at the time from Kinugasa Teinosuke. With this equipment, as well as open offers of technical advice from people outside the organization such as Kinugasa, Ōya Sōichi, and Ishi Sanji, Prokino was set for serious film production.

The organization created a fund-raising mechanism called Friends of Prokino to provide Prokino members with support, both monetary and spiritual. For contributions of one to five yen and above (or negotiable dues for workers and farmers), members of the Friends of Prokino received subscriptions to the film journal *Puroretaria Eiga,* invitations to previews of Prokino films, special privileges at Prokino-sponsored events, and the right to attend the Friends' monthly meetings.[49] The list of members published in the premier issue of *Puroretaria Eiga* includes many high-profile names familiar to those interested in Japanese literature, film, philosophy, theater, and politics of the 1930s:

> Itō Daisuke, Ishihama Tomoyuki, Hasegawa Nyozekan, Hattori Shisō, Hashimoto Eikichi, Hatta Motoo, Nii Itaru, Honma Kenji, Ōya Sōichi, Okada Tokihiko, Ono Miyakichi, Kataoka Teppei, Tanaka Saburō, Tanaka Kishirō, Taba Kazuo, Takada Tamotsu, Takeda Rintarō, Nagata Mikihiko, Nakano Eiji, Nakano Shigeharu, Murayama Tomoyoshi, Ushihara Kiyohiko, Noda Kōgo, Kurahara Korehito, Yamada Seisaburō, Yamauchi Hikaru, Furu'umi Takuji, Koishi Eiichi, Kobayashi Takiji, Eguchi Kiyoshi, Eba Osamu, Akita Ujaku, Sasaki Norio, Sasaki Takamaru, Sano Seki, Kimura Fumon, Kitamura Komatsu, Kitagawa Fuyuhiko, Kishi Yamaji, Kishi Matsuo, Mizoguchi Kenji, Miki Kiyoshi, Hijikata Yoshi, Suzuki Denmei, Suzuki Shigeyoshi.[50]

The forty-five supporters who made up the Friends of Prokino enabled Prokino's expansive growth in this third period, its filmmaking period. Living communally, creating branches across Japan, establishing funding networks—all these activities have strong resonance with the Japanese documentary movements in the postwar period. Nearly all of the innovations of postwar documentary filmmaking had already been opened as possibilities with Prokino. Indeed, Prokino went even further, offering film seminars and classes, regularly publishing books and journals of the highest quality, organizing film critics of every political stripe, and even founding its own laboratory—the Prokino Tokyo Factory[51]—in an attempt to foster technical expertise and total independence. The whole of these activities set

the precedents for independent documentary in the postwar period. It all started with the First Proletarian Film Night on 31 May 1930.

After Prokino's second convention, members rushed to make five films: *Sumida River* (Sumidagawa; 1930), *Children* (Kodomo; 1930), *Beautiful Rural Scene* (Den'en shōkei; 1930), *11th Annual Tokyo May Day* (Dai jū ikkai Tokyo Mē Dē; 1930), and *Prokino News No. 1* (Purokino nyūsu dai ippō; 1930). They formally arranged to use Tsukiji Little Theater, the center of modernist experimental theater in the prewar period, and sent their films to the censors to ensure a completely legal meeting. This was in an era when the police used a liberal interpretation of the Peace Preservation Law to control the left, and any assembly of three of more people required a permit. As it turned out, the films returned from the censors uncut. Iwasaki has suggested that the censors understood what Prokino was trying to do, given that part of their job entailed boning up on Soviet film theory and world film history.[52] More likely, the censors' leaving the films intact is evidence that there was considerable room for a heterogeneity of discourse at this point before the Manchurian Incident. Although the government was concerned about movements on the left, it allowed for dissonant expressions in certain spaces of the public sphere. The censors did not, however, pass the films without any restrictions. They prohibited Prokino from using a *benshi* during the screenings. They knew that the *setsumei,* or narration, of a screen-side narrator could convert the films into something quite different from the films they had inspected; because the potential for subversiveness in the narration of a *benshi* was out of their control, the censors prohibited Prokino from using a *benshi* altogether. They also knew that without the standard complement of the color added by narration, the films were sure to lose much of their impact. Furthermore, the censors kept the films until the day of the screenings, and Tsukiji police tried to interfere by saying the site was insufficient for a film screening. After last-minute negotiations, the police backed down, but they still restricted attendance to 225 in the 450-seat hall. In spite of this harassment, the First Proletarian Film Night finally took place. Always eager to fight against the strictures of the censorship system, the filmmakers borrowed records of May Day songs and the "Internationale" and played them during the screening; this proved to be a powerful substitute for the *benshi.*[53]

After 225 spectators had passed through a gauntlet of police who frisked everyone, a thousand people still lined up outside the hall. Despite empty seats, Prokino could only promise a second showing the following week. Inside, the five films were projected, with the record player turned up full blast. The spectators laughed, cheered, and clapped throughout the screening. They jeered at police in the films as well as the ones lining the

aisles of the hall. When the last film—*May Day*—played, the theater surged with energy as the spectators clapped and sang along with the music. Even after the lights went up, the audience demanded an encore of *May Day.* The end of the screening was not the end of the event. Audience members continued to sing as they filed out of the theater and poured onto the street. As they joined the less fortunate thousand outside, their excitement was infectious, and the crowd spontaneously transformed into a demonstration that made its way through the streets of nearby Ginza. The police could only look on. Prokino's first concerted attempt at low-tech, politicized documentary worked, proving that everything Sasa had proposed was within reach. Only now, as Iwasaki confidently pointed out, it was no longer "Camera—Toy/Weapon," but "Camera—Weapon/Weapon."[54]

Prokino lasted a total of five years, during which its branches produced eleven newsreels, nineteen films of incident reportage, twelve documentaries, two fiction films, two agitprop films, an animation film, and a film mixing animation and live action.[55] Of these forty-eight films, thirty-six were produced by the Tokyo branch. Five were produced in Kyoto, and Okuyama produced two. The Osaka, Kanagawa, Kanezawa, and Sapporo branches each produced one film, and one film was coproduced by the Tokyo and Osaka branches.[56] The number of films is impressive, considering the financial and political obstacles Prokino's members faced. Indeed, the bulk of the production was accomplished in the three years following the second convention. Police surveillance records provide evidence of a lively screening schedule. At the movement's height in 1931, Prokino ran two to seven events per month in every part of the country, attracting from twenty-one spectators to twenty-four hundred spectators per show.[57] After that, censorship, followed by outright police suppression, slowed Prokino's filmmaking to a trickle.

The police believed Prokino to be a threat from the beginning. In yearly Home Ministry secret reports titled *The Conditions of the Social Movements,* they described how they kept a watchful eye on the film movement. They did not consider Prokino to be as big as or as threatening as the organizations of Korean laborers or NAPF itself, but they noted potential energies slumbering in the movement's chosen media of struggle: "This League's power is not strong yet, but their ability to take advantage of cinema's popularity means that in the future we can assume that they will achieve considerable success."[58]

Initially, the censorship aimed at Prokino's film was light, with some of the first films requiring no reediting at all. However, the censors grew increasingly aggressive. Because the films are no longer extant, it is difficult to judge whether the censors were reacting to deepening radicality in the



Figure 3. Poster for Prokino's Proletarian Film Night.

films, although this was a trend within the movement as a whole—simply moving from criticism to fairly large-scale production was itself an escalation of activism. Censors excised a third of Kitagawa Tetsuo and Seo Mitsuyo's innovative film that mixed animation and live action, *Dorei sensō* (Slave war).[59] After two months in the hands of the censors, the film was so unintelligible that it became known even outside of the movement

both for its creative use of animation and as an example of the excesses of Japanese censorship.[60] When the censors finally released *Earth* (Tochi) after holding it for nearly half a year, the second reel was almost gone. Today, the surviving fragment, which shows the activities of some farmers photographed in the strong compositions of Soviet socialist realism, is nonsensical. The following list is an example of the cuts required of one Prokino film, culled from the censors' records. The film is *Prokino News No. 7* (Purokino nyūsu dai nanahō; 1932), which lost seventeen of its ninety-five meters:

1. 1st insert (Losing jobs to the war, etc.); cut 1.5 meters.
2. 13th subtitle (Workers' allies etc.), 14th subtitle (Actual etc.) and 7th insert (Social Democratic Party, etc.), 8th insert (Katō Kanju etc.), 9th insert (Asō Hisashi, etc.), 10th insert (Yoshida Yūichi etc.), 11th insert (Yoshida Yūichi); cut 5 meters.
3. 16th subtitle (Oppression), 20th subtitle (For whom?) and 13th insert (Illegal movement, etc.), 14th insert (5th District's Yoshida Yūichi etc); cut 2.5 meters.
4. 23rd subtitle (Kind Woman's Heart, etc.), 24th subtitle (But . . .), 25th subtitle (The unemployed increase), 26th subtitle (Snow falls, etc.), 27th subtitle (In this . . . etc.); cut 2.5 meters.
5. 29th subtitle (Proletariat etc.), 30th subtitle (Even at schools, etc.), 31st subtitle (Anti-War), 32nd subtitle (Anti-Fascist, etc.), 33rd subtitle (Progressive students, etc.), and the scene of people passing out handbills being arrested; cut 6 meters.
6. 37th subtitle (Scab); cut .5 meters.[61]

The harassment by the censors was a necessary evil because Prokino conducted its business as a legal organization, at least until even this became impossible—eventually, even filmmakers who followed proper procedure could land in the "pig box" *(butabako),* or slammer. But Prokino still fought the censors on as many fronts as possible. Members regularly published studies of the censorship system, such as Tanaka Jun'ichirō's detailed analysis in his three-part "Eiga Ken'etsu no Kenkyū" (Study of film censorship).[62] They also used their magazines to subvert the censorship of individual films. *Storm over Asia* (1928) was one of the most influential Soviet films to receive distribution in prewar Japan. After the censors cut scenes out, Prokino published a narrative description of the complete film in short-story form.[63] Members also published the unexpurgated scripts of their own censored films, allowing anyone to read and study what the censors tried to keep from the public. The collection of uncensored scripts

in the July 1932 issue of *Puroretaria Eiga,* which included *Prokino No. 7,* ends with this slogan in boldface type: **"Absolute opposition to unjust censorship!"**[64]

Looking at the few Prokino films that are extant today, it is easy to understand why so many of the members' descriptions of their own filmmaking include the qualification, "We knew the films were not masterpieces, but. . . ."[65] Indeed, historians are often tempted to look past their awkward craft to the historical reality they have preserved. For example, the May Day films were among the most popular productions, but judging from what has survived, these were very simple films. *Twelfth Annual Tokyo May Day* (Dai jūnikai Tokyo Mē Dē; 1931) begins with views of the icons of location for the working class: factories and smokestacks. Workers pass by posters for the upcoming May Day demonstration. Thousands of people gather in Tokyo's Shibaura district; it is raining, but no one seems to mind. The police search everyone. A man and a woman, waving hats in the air, address the crowd in energetic speeches reminiscent of those from Vertov's Kino Pravda newsreels. The crowd then sets off for Ueno Park, filling the streets with a massive, moving demonstration, and the film ends. Mary Ryan has suggested a starting point for examining this kind of "parade" document:

> The reports of parades are simply very resonant documents. First, the parade offers a well-rounded documentation of past culture; it conjured up an emotional power and aesthetic expressiveness that the simply literary formulation of ideas or values lacked. Second, accounts of parades record the actions as well as the words of the past. In a parade, an organized body, usually of men, marched into the public streets to spell out a common social identity.[66]

Although Ryan is concerned primarily with the development of the civic parade in American cities in the 1800s, her basic approach is a useful way to look at all manner of processions. These mobile groups of people are texts with multiple authors (the thousands of participants) who express their identity to bystanders. They act within the political and social constraints and possibilities of their time, telling us how they perceived themselves. In *Twelfth Annual Tokyo May Day,* we notice that one of the lively speeches is given by a woman (in 1930, the women's rights movement was well under way in Japan, and the Lower House of the Diet passed a female suffrage bill). In contrast, as Ryan points out, most American parades in the nineteenth century were conceived, executed, and performed by men, with individual women used primarily as erotic spectacle (imitating the Statue of Liberty on a float, for example). Although the parades of later Japanese war films relegate women to the sidelines, sending their men and

boys off to war, in *Twelfth Annual Tokyo May Day* women are given a platform and a voice. Prokino itself had a number of women in relatively central positions, although the fact that they were relegated to office jobs reveals how the organization faithfully mirrored the chauvinism of the larger society. However, in the cinematic record of this May Day parade, women make their presence felt as one of many groups of actors. Other groups include the politically and socially disadvantaged: transportation workers, different kinds of factory workers (with men and women forming separate groups), farmers, and *burakumin*. The people organized themselves by these various identities, marching down the streets in loose, disorderly sections and asserting both their identities in specific groups and their solidarity with all the others. It is also important to consider the spectators of this spectacle. The vast majority peer from buildings and line the sidewalks. Some offer water to marchers in gestures of support. Another distinct species of spectator is the police, who watch in little bands, from the backs of horses or from large trucks. They stop marchers to search for weapons and hover at the fringes of the parade. A constant presence in this film, the police were very clearly on the minds of the cameramen.

It is difficult for audiences today to become as excited over this film as the twenty-four hundred spectators who watched it at the Fourth Proletarian Film Night in 1931. However, it remains more than a dead document from the past, as I found out when I showed the film to a group of Koreans at an event celebrating the centenary of the documentary. The Prokino film is strikingly similar in form and content to videos being made by contemporary Korean video collectives such as PURN, Seoul Visual Collective, Baliteo Women's Film Group, and Han-Kyoreh Group. In fact, the Prokino situation as a whole has much in common with the low-tech video activism that took place in Korea in the 1990s. For Korean spectators watching *Twelfth Annual Tokyo May Day* in 1995, the 1931 Japanese film had an exciting contemporaneousness, despite its place in the "historical," backward-looking context of a cinema centenary event. It is a mistake to underestimate the power of these modest films. As expressions of a working-class social reality in an age when the camera was out of the reach of all but the wealthy, these films engaged their audiences in ways that are difficult to appreciate after a century of immersion in moving imagery. It is possible to say with some certainty, however, that few documentaries made today are capable of sparking spontaneous demonstrations.

Back in the 1930s, most of the films made by Prokino's members were shot on reversal film, making each a unique print. Each film was screened until scratches clouded the images, edits disintegrated, and the print became unprojectable. This is one reason so many of the films are missing

or extant only as fragments. Prokino films circulated throughout Japan, from Kyushu to Hokkaido. The various branches organized large screenings, and mobile projection units brought Prokino to villages and workplaces in some of the most remote spots in the countryside. There are accounts of screenings that were held in areas where cinema had never before reached, making proletarian documentaries some people's first experience of the cinema.

However, there was disagreement over how completely Prokino and the arts movement in its entirety were penetrating the "daily life of the proletariat." We can see these tensions in the discussion inspired by Iwasaki Akira's *Asphalt Road* (Asufaruto no michi; 1930), one of Prokino's most interesting films.[67] Iwasaki was inspired to make this film when he read an essay by Kataoka Teppei titled "Asufaruto o Yuku" (Walking on asphalt streets), which begins with the line, "Tokyo's asphalt pavement has been prepared as a battleground for the riots and civil war which may happen at any time between the government and the people. Invisible barricades are being constructed." Paved roads were a new feature of the modern city, and from Iwasaki's view on the left, these smooth surfaces were best suited for moving tanks and troops in military parades. The long, straight boulevards and squared-off corners were perfect for setting up machine guns. This perception provided the kernel of an idea for Iwasaki's film, in which he used telephoto lenses and a variety of photographic tricks to capture the energy of the street and bring the spirit of Kataoka's essay to the screen. He spent months wandering the city and shooting everything he saw. Inspired by Ruttmann and Vertov, he gathered his images into a "city symphony" that emphasized the contradictions of the modern city—from its exciting promises and distractions to its frightening poverty and the hard manual labor maintaining the city demanded. Iwasaki called it his "photorealistic montage film" *(jissha no montāji eiga),* and had it survived, it probably would be considered a landmark in Japanese avant-garde cinema. Prokino members looking back at the film decades later assessed it as one of the most interesting they produced, but Iwasaki remained self-critical: "I made the film as a fan of European avant-garde filmmakers like René Clair and Walther Ruttmann. I aimed to make a film as a weapon of the proletariat, but ended up with a typical estrangement of technique and aim. That was its weak point."[68] The estrangement was more likely located between the film and its audience. It should be seen as continuous with the experimental city symphonies of the amateur filmmakers; however, Iwasaki never mentioned them in his descriptions of the project. Whereas the bourgeois amateurs would have found the film to be working in familiar territory, it became the subject of some controversy within the proletarian film move-

ment. In an angry review for *Puroretaria Eiga,* one worker asked in exasperation, "We are supposed to watch *Asphalt Road* and become agitated?"[69]

These tensions evolved into a new direction with an article by Kurahara Korehito, the 1931 Prokino convention, and the start of Prokino's fourth period. Kurahara, a leading theorist of the arts movement as a whole, was attuned to much of what was being written at the time in the Soviet Union. The issue of popularization had long been a thorny issue, but Kurahara's "Puroretaria Geijutsu Undō no Soshiki Mondai" (The organizational problem of the proletarian art movement) in the June 1931 issue of *Nappu* (NAPF) brought it to the fore and initiated vigorous debate about the future of the various arts movements. He argued that NAPF should avoid thinking about "ideological influence" and concentrate on "organizational influence." He called on all the leagues to find people who love the arts and form small groups within the industrial sphere, such as factory film circles: "As for the film group—this is everyone from the supporters of proletarian film and Soviet film to the fans of Kurishima Sumiko and Hayashi Chōjirō [Hasegawa Kazuo]."[70] Co-opting the audience of two of the most popular actors of the day was no small task.

After much discussion, Kurahara's proposal was accepted, leading to the dismantling of NAPF under the new name Nippon Puroretaria Bunka Renmei (Japan Proletarian Culture Federation, or KOPF, from the Esperanto name Federacio de Proletaj Kultur Organizoj Japanaj). Prokino became a member of KOPF and quickly set about analyzing and reconstructing its organizational structure to respond to the new direction, to the bolshevization of the movement. Prokino made it easy, even automatic, for anyone to become a member. Previously, an individual had to complete classes offered by Prokino to be considered for membership. Most significant was the organization's attempt to create a system of "circles." There had always been a kind of suborganization for spectators to join called Kino Riigu (Kino League). In actuality, Kino Riigu was little more than a fan club; viewers who had voluntarily expressed admiration and who had made offers to help were included. However, Prokino's new mission was to organize film lovers—everyone down to the fans of Kurishima Sumiko and Hayashi Chōjirō, two enormously popular actors in the 1930s. "To organize film lovers" became something of a slogan used to refer to both Prokino's goal and the impossibility of its attainment (secret government documents from the surveilling of the movement even used it, as did former member Komori Shizuo in an interview sixty years after the fact).[71] If this was their mission, it meant much more than renaming Kino Riigu. Realistically, using the fans of Kurishima and Chōjirō as a definition of

success meant organizing the entire populace of Japan. But Prokino's members tried anyway. They found the reconfiguration of Kino Riigu into circles difficult enough, but organizing Chōjirō fans into left-wing film circles proved impossible.

These reorganization efforts were accompanied by Prokino's publication of a new newspaper called *Eiga Kurabu* (Film club). This two- to eight-page periodical, which was designed to be Prokino's fanzine for the masses, initially came out twice a month, but police pressure made publication increasingly irregular. In 1933 only three issues were produced. Extant issues of *Eiga Kurabu* provide a slightly different perspective on the proletarian film movement compared with Prokino's earlier journals and books. *Eiga Kurabu* included reviews by workers, reports on police pressure, and accounts of the first film workers' strike at Shinkō Kinema. It published notes on film production (both mainstream and Prokino) and also a few articles on the activities of "Erukino," or the Rōnō Eiga Dōmei (Worker-Farmer Film League), about which little is known today. *Eiga Kurabu* provides a vibrant portrait of Prokino activities outside of the head office.

By the time of the fourth convention, in May 1932, Prokino had managed to establish fifty circles in Tokyo and about a hundred nationwide, and internal Home Ministry reports reveal that the police viewed these developments as a further radicalization of the movement that oriented it toward revolution.[72] Thus Prokino had become exceedingly complex just as it entered a period of violent government suppression. Surveillance reports from the time show that the police went to great lengths to record Prokino's organizational structure, creating complex charts and paying close attention to the chain of command (including the home addresses of members in leadership positions).[73] The chart in Figure 4, which is taken from a government summary of the left-wing culture movement labeled "secret," illustrates how bulky the structure of the film movement had become.[74]

It was precisely this complex organizational framework that became the focus of the government's quasi-legal and illegal suppression. Key arrests easily broke down communication channels, leeched expertise, and eroded both leadership and membership. Any kind of public activity became difficult after 1931. For example, as the man in charge of rural screenings and distribution, Noto Setsuo often had to deal with police pressure. He was arrested wherever he went. Occasionally he experienced torture (one method involved the placement of a chopstick between two of his fingers; someone would then press the fingertips together and simultaneously twist the chopstick). The police would hold him for forty-nine days, the lawful limit for holding someone without a trial. They would then let

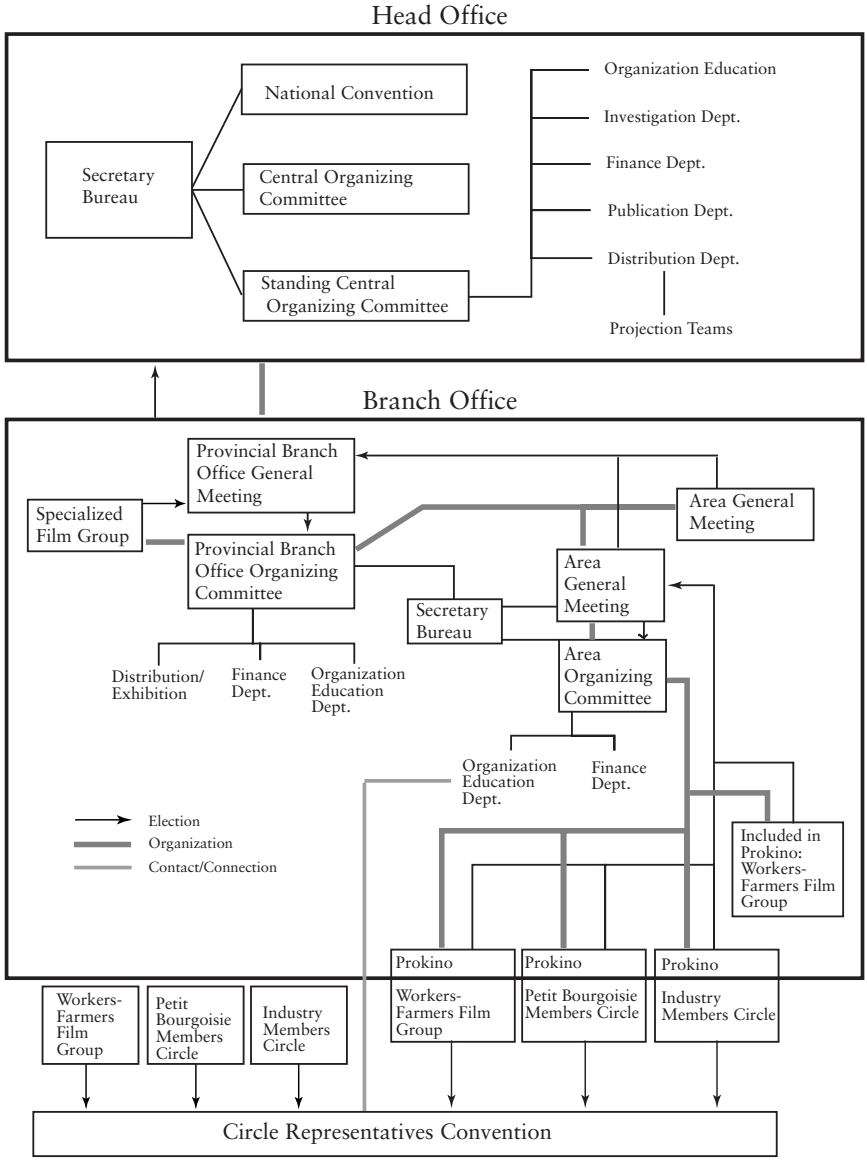


Figure 4. Prokino organizational chart from a secret police surveillance report, 1932.

him out, and he would soon be arrested again. Noto's experiences were typical for core Prokino members.[75]

The pressure that Prokino was under is reflected by the film journals. *Puroretaria Eiga* was renamed *Prokino* and then returned to *Puroretaria Eiga*. However, after the March 1931 issue of that journal, members were able to produce only four slim pamphletlike issues before quitting altogether.

In the end, their only remaining publication was *Eiga Kurabu,* which was occasionally handwritten and mimeographed. Prokino's publications listed "sacrificial victims," meaning those currently being held in jail, because many of the organization's events were summarily halted by police, who hauled people off to the so-called pig box. One roster in a 1932 issue of *Eiga Kurabu* lists eighteen names, including those of most of the central activists.[76] In September 1932, police raided the Prokino Tokyo Factory with the help of *yakuza,* confiscating all the equipment. All the publications became irregular and finally stopped in late 1933.

Atsugi Taka, Prokino's most prominent female member, gives a sense of how this "forced attrition" became a part of daily life in Prokino's fifth period, the period of suppression, which began when the organization's May 1932 general convention was interrupted by a police raid. In a reminiscence about the movement, she describes the last Prokino study group *(kenkyūjo)* on 5 October 1932. By this time, film production had slowed down, and most screenings were held illegally at locations where workers were striking; study groups had become one of the few ways to keep the organization alive. Without thinking, Prokino leaders scheduled their first meeting with new students on the eve of "Watasei Day," the anniversary of central committee member Watanabe Seinosuke's assassination in Taiwan. They met at the usual place, Tsukiji Little Theater, with about twenty new members. However, just as the meeting began, the police appeared and broke it up. Because this was not unexpected, the participants had already made contingency plans. They split up and then reconvened the study session at a private home, but the police burst in the front door. Atsugi escaped through the window, but all the new students were arrested on the spot. They were released the next day, but this proved to be the end of Prokino's efforts at education and recruitment.[77] As a result of such relentless police pressure, the entire movement eventually petered out.

It is appropriate to pause here briefly to consider Prokino's short history from the perspective of visible and hidden discourses. In the first decades of Japanese documentary, filmmakers had room to voice complaints. The strictures placed on public speech, gesture, and cultural production were loose and vague, even after enactment of the 1925 Peace Preservation Law, and enforcement was relatively limited. The prisons were not pleasant places, and the use of torture was not unusual, but few actually died at the hands of police; authorities made a strong effort to bring dissidents back into line and integrate them into society, as opposed to simply making them disappear, as is common in most comparable national contexts of violent suppression. Things changed after the Manchurian Incident, as I discuss in detail in the next chapter. Japan's steady path

to militarization and war spelled a tighter grip on public discourse, although the emphasis on reintegration of dissenters into the social fabric remained constant. At the same time, authorities certainly saw Prokino's efforts to organize in factory settings as a radicalization of the movement; the increase in suppressive force is an indication of Prokino's efficacy.

We can see the discursive power struggles occurring in public spaces throughout the pages of Prokino publications in the form of *fuseji*. Prokino writers anticipated the censors and substituted the *kanji* for problematic words such as *kakumei* (revolution) with *X*s; with the offensive words blotted out, they could print their magazines without further censorship. In other words, the strings of *X*s that filled the pages of Prokino magazines and books were a display of the power being exerted in the public sphere. At the same time, the fact that the writers allowed their words to be deleted cannot be reduced to simple submission to authority. After all, everyone knew how to read most of these *X*s, and the content of the journals was more boisterously radical than ever. Prokino could print its magazines because it fulfilled its obligation to abide by the terms of authority by submitting to the force of government power in the form of censorship. After the Manchurian Incident and crackdown on the left, this public game of domination and submission became insufficient, and leftist film thought, writing, film production, and screening were squeezed into the hidden spaces, into secret gatherings at the homes of sympathizers and members or at factories. By 1933, the more visible forms of discontent, such as publication and film production, became exceedingly dangerous, leaving the energy of the proletarian film movement confined primarily to private spaces. From that point on, open expression of serious criticism had to be camouflaged in appropriately safe language for quiet insertion into public publications and films.

From this perspective, we can see that Prokino's radicalization of the cinema between 1929 and 1934 found a continuing existence in the hidden discursive field of the later 1930s and early 1940s. This conception of Prokino "going undergound" or "going into hiding" is particularly convincing if we recognize the many continuities between the filmmaking of the prewar left and that of the postwar left. Simultaneously, we can also see how the movement's theorization of ideology—its vision of a politicized, activist cinema and its rhetoric of mission, propagation, and agitation—was co-opted by an increasingly militarized documentary as Japan went to war.

[3] *A Hardening of Style*

In the early 1930s, the style of nonfiction filmmaking in Japan gradually took shape, assuming a conventionalized form that is recognizable in documentaries to this day. Stylistic conventions of postwar films, such as the heavy use of silent-style intertitles, can be traced back to the long transition to sound film. Other continuities over the decades include theoretical, practical, and political issues, from the ethics of reenactment to questions of subjectivity. These early developments in the documentary film form interacted with interventions by the government as it redefined its relationship to the film industry.

In the 1930s, government participation tipped the balance between support and control in favor of the latter. Early federal funding strategies eventually transformed into forced industrial reorganization designed to facilitate exploitation of the medium for the ends of "enlightenment" and mass mobilization of the citizenry. This attention from the government had a decisive impact on the path documentary took, both in terms of style and in the role documentary film assumed in society. In the course of the 1930s, the documentary form moved from the realm of *kogata eiga* and news film into the mainstream movie theaters, propelled in part by events in China. The period after the China Incident would become known as the golden age of Japanese documentary film, a time when documentary reached a place of prominence it rarely achieved during any other period in a century of film history. Despite this proliferation of nonfiction filmmaking, the various forms of documentary shared an array of conventions that are attributable as much to the exertion of power over public forms of representation as to their common roots. In this chapter, I address developments in the Japanese documentary world through the 1930s and early 1940s and analyze the template for that world: the hard style of the public sphere.

Terada Torahiko and Transformations toward Autonomy

In the early 1930s, as the efforts of Prokino dissipated under police pressure, the Manchurian Incident and ensuing chaos in China stimulated explosive growth in news films. Competition among newspaper companies to report the fighting in moving imagery intensified. The precedent set in the 1920s for using elaborate schemes to report incidents first became standard procedure for war news. By the mid-1930s, the use of airplanes to race film back to labs at home offices was not unusual, even for events transpiring in neighboring countries.[1] In 1934, Asahi and Tōnichi Daimai newspapers began making what we think of as "newsreels," regularly produced programs illustrating current headlines along with a mix of human interest stories.[2] After their success, Dōmei Tsūshin and Yomiuri joined in, along with foreign imports from Fox-Movietone, Paramount, and others. Until this period in the mid-1930s, newsreels had often been shown at outdoor screenings near train stations, but now they became regular features in the programs of legitimate movie theaters.

For the first half of the decade, the news film remained the domain of mainstream journalism; film studios and independent production companies did not make newsreels. Throughout the early 1930s, each newspaper established its own film unit, even if only temporarily; that is, after all, the nature of competition. The fuel for this rivalry was the war in China. The Manchurian Incident in 1931 and the subsequent political turmoil provided ready raw material for these production units. The events on the mainland had outstanding news value. War is the perfect subject for news films because of its large-scale spectacle and its structure; "incidents" are the basis for this form of visual journalism, and the war provided a steady stream of subject matter. With a beginning, middle, and end, each incident or campaign appeared virtually prepackaged for the simple temporal structure of the news film. Along with newspapers, news films provided a connective tissue joining far-flung events, famous personas, and audiences on the home front.

Although their films were decidedly nationalistic, news film producers saw their work primarily in the context of market economy competition, not as the voice of state propaganda. This would seem to obscure the position of journalism in relation to the state. However, the rhetoric these filmmakers left in film journals preceding the China Incident is surprisingly free of wartime jingoism. For example, in a 1932 article in *Eiga no Tomo* (Film friend), Ōta Hamatarō's description of his experience shooting the Shanghai Incident contains almost no nationalistic jargon; however, it does

display a nearly neurotic concern for beating other news companies to the scene and showing off the heroism of the cameramen at the front.[3]

Of course, this kind of competition was possible only because the war was a topic very much on the mind of the newspapers' consumers. People all over Japan regularly attended newsreel specialty theaters, and many would attempt to see the different versions of the same events put out by the various companies. A primary desire driving this demand for newsreels was audience members' hope of seeing relatives fighting in faraway China. Families often had little or no idea where their relatives were on the continent. If an individual was lucky enough to catch a glimpse of a son or husband at the front, the family could apply to the studio for a *sukuriin gotaimen,* a frame blowup of the scene in which the relative appeared. This labor-intensive service offered by the film companies would sometimes make news itself in more dramatic cases.[4] The way newsreels connected the soldiers at the front lines and the citizens at the home front, making one end of this "lifeline" cognizant of the other, was a social function that did not escape the notice of the military. This is clear from the fact that military people were often included in panel discussions published in film magazines. This function of the newsreels probably contributed to the military's readiness to support film production in a more direct manner.

The first films produced with help from the various factions of the military were significant as departures from standard news films, the first branching out toward what we usually think of as "documentary." These were the first long-form, large-scale attempts at nonfiction film in Japan. As such, they would have uncommon influence on the path future documentary would take, because the conventions they originated became elaborated and hardened as the war escalated in the coming years. This group of transitional films—*March 10* (Sangatsu tōka; 1933), *This One War* (Kore issen; 1933), *Lifeline of the Sea* (Umi no seimeisen; 1933), *Japan in Time of Crisis* (Hijōji Nippon; 1933), *Defend It, the Great Sky* (Mamore ōzora; 1933), *Speaking of Youthful Japan* (Seinen Nippon o kataru; 1934), *Japan Advancing to the North* (Hokushin Nippon; 1934), and *Crossing the Equator* (Sekitō o koete; 1935)[5]—became known as *henshū eiga,* or edited films.

It was only in the 1930s that production companies created the independent position of "editor."[6] This was the era when editing came into the consciousness of filmmakers full force. The concept was primarily learned, theorized, and developed through translation and criticism rather than example.[7] Many of the most influential texts on editing came from the Soviets, evidencing both the influence of Prokino's activities and the political malleability of Soviet-style montage. The writings of Vsevolod Pudovkin,

Sergei Eisenstein, and Dziga Vertov were translated in the late 1920s and early 1930s, although the most important Soviet films, such as *Potemkin* (Bronenosets "Potemkin"; 1925) and *Earth* (Zemlya; 1930), were never imported in the prewar period. Filmmakers could read about the films, but they could not see them without leaving Japan. Soviet films that did achieve distribution—such as Pudovkin's *Storm over Asia* (Potomok Chingis-khana; 1928) and Eisenstein's *Old and New* (Staoeinovoe; 1929)—were heavily censored. The excitement over these writings and films was a factor behind the conception of the *henshū eiga*. In fact, although these critical endeavors in montage theory were said to have influenced the likes of Itō Daisuke, Ozu Yasujirō, Itami Mansaku, and other feature filmmakers, the trace of that influence is far stronger in these first compilation films.

One of the main producers of *henshū eiga* was Suzuki Shigeyoshi, who made his name with leftist tendency films such as *What Made Her Do It?* (Nani ga kanojo o sō saseta ka; 1930). Impressed by the recent translations of Pudovkin's writings on editing, Suzuki wanted to bring montage theory into practice. He pushed for the establishment of a specialist position within his studio, Shinkō Kinema Ōizumi, and proceeded to make what he called *henshū eiga*: "The 'editor' I was advocating was not simply a technician connecting strips of film; it meant a 'person creating films through attachment techniques,' or, in the end, a person making 'edited film.' *Henshū eiga* takes cut film photographed for a completely different motive and constructs scenes by *joining them organically*; this is a film creatively produced with editing."[8] Suzuki's first attempts at the *henshū eiga* were *March 10, This One War,* and *Defend It, the Great Sky.*

The big year for the *henshū eiga* was 1933, with the release of *Japan in Time of Crisis, March 10, This One War,* and *Lifeline of the Sea.* All of these films dipped into the growing archive of nonfiction images of the world being collected primarily by news organizations. Films such as *March 10* and *This One War* were appropriations of powerful images from the past, many of which had already established their place in popular consciousness from their incarnations in previous films. Of these films released in 1933, *Lifeline of the Sea* has the least amount of appropriated footage, signaling a step toward long-form documentaries built on more than editing. It was directed by Aochi Chūzō, who, like many of the directors of early nature and travel documentaries, came from outside the film world.

Lifeline of the Sea was designed to introduce Japanese citizens to Japan's territories in the South Pacific. The production began when the navy invited Yokohama Cinema to send cameramen along on a survey expedition to the South Pacific.[9] This gives the film a slightly schizophrenic quality. Although it is filled with an honest, wide-eyed curiosity for the

customs and lifestyles of the Pacific Islanders, resulting in a valuable ethnographic record of South Pacific cuisine, work, music making, and dancing, alongside this curiosity runs a rhetorical thread that serves the ends of the navy. The film was made only a couple of years after the 1930 London Naval Conference, where Japan came one step closer to confrontation with Western powers when the United States and Great Britain managed to ratify a treaty that limited the warship tonnage of the Japanese Navy. In part a response to this political situation, *Lifeline of the Sea* makes a case for the importance of the islands, and thus the navy as well. It explains the history of the area's colonization by Western powers, highlighting Japan's acquisition of the Marianas, the Caroline Islands, the Marshall Islands, Tinian, and Saipan after World War I. One of the highlights of the film is an arrival scene straight out of the colonial imagination: two small military boats arrive on a pristine beach where seminaked islanders gather. Sailors in formal whites assemble and march up the beach with an enormous Japanese flag and enter the islanders' village. The film is blunt about the value of these possessions: they have raw materials that are shipped to Japan, where the factories make new products and export them to the world.

An important factor in the emergence of the *henshū eiga* was sound technology. This period was midway through Japan's unusually long conversion to talkies, a process that lasted until around 1936. Contemporary viewers commented on the impressive experience of hearing the amplified sounds of war in the movie theaters: cannons, pistols, machine guns, land mines, and charging troops.[10] For audiences today, the most fascinating aspect of the *henshū eiga* is the rough-edged, transitional quality of the producers' use of this new machinery. For example, Yokohama Cinema produced both sound and silent versions of *Lifeline of the Sea,* and in the sound version the narrator can be heard continually clearing his throat. The creators of *Japan in Time of Crisis* "took into consideration the idea of converting . . . what might be treated in treatises or essays or addresses" in the new medium of the talkie.[11] At the beginning of the film, Army Minister Araki Sadao walks on-screen, stands in front of a large Japanese flag, and proceeds to talk; he continues to talk until the end of the film. According to the producer's description of the production process, the filmmakers shot ninety minutes of Araki talking and then went about gathering archival footage, staging scenes, and creating skitlike fictional sequences. The filmmakers were hyperaware of how the new technology forced the eyes and ears to work at the same time, and that the power of vision tended to dominate sound.[12] From another point of view, *Japan in Time of Crisis* could be seen as the ultimate transitional film between silent cinema and the talkie, with Araki taking the role of on-screen *benshi.* Indeed, in com-

ments he made after the first screening, Colonel Honma, the Army officer in charge of newspapers, made this connection explicit.[13]

Another film with this strong transitional quality is *Speaking of Youthful Japan,* which was an attempt to produce a cinematic *zadankai* (the transcript of a panel discussion; the *zadankai* is a common convention of all manner of publication in Japan). The film begins with an explanation that Japan is in a time of crisis, then shows a group of stodgy-looking, right-wing intellectuals sitting around a table in front of a painted backdrop. One by one, medium close-ups single out the men, and each gives a speech in formal, rhythmic tones; the speeches are illustrated by news film footage wherever appropriate. What makes this film a special instance of the early sound documentary is that its direct address from enunciator to audience is mapped by a unique kind of eye line; each speaker stands before the camera and scans the space in front of him back and forth, as if he were addressing a live audience. This action was meant to make it appear that the speaker was looking toward every corner of the movie theater, but the effect is simply surreal for its evocation of an oscillating electric fan's movement. If the filmmakers realized their mistake after the fact, they did not reshoot; the speakers were probably too important to be asked to perform their parts again.

That the *henshū eiga* could attract the participation of people like Araki indicates the growing stature of the nonfiction film. In 1935, the newsreel's importance was recognized with the first roundtable devoted to the subject.[14] Before that time, news films had always been seen as supplementary to newspapers. However, the spectacle of the war, the popularity (and thus economic viability) of long-form documentaries, and the new discourse appearing in film journalism all combined to contribute to the growing autonomy of the nonfiction cinema.

The new stature of the news film was reflected in a well-known 1935 essay by Terada Torahiko titled "Nyūsu Eiga to Shinbun Kiji" (News film and newspaper articles).[15] Torahiko was a famous essayist who came out of the world of science, and he occasionally wrote about the cinema. His writings are fairly inconsistent, giving them a truly essayistic character. Because of his early emphasis on the scientific, mechanical qualities of cinema, writers from the science-versus-art debates in documentary in the late 1930s consistently turned to Torahiko for authoritative quotes to support their arguments.[16] For example, in "Eiga no Sekaizō" (Cinema's world image) Torahiko appears to be writing from the perspective of the hard sciences; he disavows any meaningful relationship between the reality captured on film and the physical world, subordinating cinema to science.[17] On the other hand, in "Kamera o Sagete" (Carrying a camera), he turns to

the stunning capability of microscopic cinematography to suggest that cinema transforms material phenomena of the physical world, leading us to extract novel information about the world through its unique capabilities, and also through its limitations.[18] Here, Torahiko makes a Vertov-like comparison of the human and the camera eye. In the essay that concerns us, "News Film and Newspaper Articles," he explores the differences between photographic representations of the living world and descriptions rendered in the printed word. In all three articles he writes from substantially different positions—science, art, and document—but this inconsistency has the fresh feel of musings about something truly new.

Torahiko begins "News Film and Newspaper Articles" by exploring the differences between newsreel culture and newspaper culture, running down a list of essential oppositions. Although people generally assigned the news film a subordinate, dependent relationship to print journalism, Torahiko breaks ranks and suggests that the two represent independent fields. Common convention had the written word moving thought, inspiring the imagination to reach its highest potentialities; by way of contrast, cinema was experienced and processed in the most passive of manners. Torahiko inverts this logic, arguing that the newspaper has devolved into a medium completely reliant upon convention, which deadens the imagination. On the other hand, cinema is in no need of such stereotyping, because it captures events in history as they occur spontaneously. Through this inversion, Torahiko escapes conventional wisdom and assigns a new importance to the youthful medium, elevating it from its subordinate and supplementary position vis-à-vis the newspaper. To illustrate the weaknesses of the printed news, he offers the example of an unveiling ceremony for a statue and how each medium would report it:

> In most cases this would be entered on the so-called society page in the most conventional, abstract manner. You could make this phenomenon feel like reality and stimulate impressionistic and sensual associations in the reader, but there is basically nothing like this. Instead, correctly noting the order of procession and the names of the people conducting the ceremony is, if not customary, at least ideal and possible. Actually, if one saw this in a newsreel, one would not understand the progression of the entire ceremony, nor such things as who is giving speeches and greetings. Instead, the phenomena within the limits of the camera's field of vision—the inevitable as well as the unexpected, the important or the trivial—would be recorded and re-created.[19]

Thus newspapers convert live events and incidents into deadened convention in order to make them meaningful to readers. Cinema, based as it is on the physical recording properties of the lens and film strip, documents what happens before the camera, without any tendency to assign everything

meaning through abstraction and caricature. Although a human operates the camera, the assembly of apparatuses making up the medium avoids, even resists, the systematization of the sensual world. From this perspective, Torahiko offers a theory of reception as he raises basic issues surrounding the differences between readership and spectatorship. The newspaper depends upon well-worn stereotypes to the extent that the imaginations of its readers wither and their minds enter a kind of paralysis. However,

> when we see trivial events shot on news films, we adults, and of course children as well, are actually surprised by a "discovery" from time to time. Films, in some sense, are concrete expressions in and of themselves, but within them are hidden discoveries of truth like a bottomless treasure chest. In this regard, we could say that the newspaper social article is worth no more than a so-called treasure map, a crude map filled with mistakes. Thus, the most important duty of the news film is the enlightenment of the human mind.[20]

For Torahiko, cinema is the medium of "discovery." Its Bazinian-style freedom allows viewers to scan the frame, notice the unexpected, and imagine the world's possibilities. This contrasts with the slots into which newspaper reporters cram their news. The new medium of nonfiction film seemed refreshingly *free of style* to the scientist. Ironically, the real situation was precisely the opposite of what Torahiko perceived, for this was precisely the period of elaborate conventionalization of the nonfiction form.[21] At the same time, Torahiko's essay speaks to the growing prestige and autonomy of film as a mass medium, and his theoretical observations, although arguably naive, point to future trends in the rhetoric surrounding documentary. It is important to recognize that Torahiko was writing at a time before documentary's particular set of codes was complete. The distinction between news film and other forms of documentary was still hazy, and much would change in the latter half of the decade.

Indeed, Torahiko based his argument on the complete exclusion of montage, precisely the point at which new forms of documentary and the journalistic news film parted ways. The *henshū eiga* was a phase leading to films that looked more like "documentary" in the common current sense of the term. This differentiation occurred over the space of several years, and at some point the division was made official with the appellation *bunka eiga* (culture film) assigned to the documentary form. There is no consensus on exactly when this naming took place. In fact, how it came about was the subject of much confused discussion in *zadankai* and film reviews from early on. For example, a panel concerning the development of the documentary by various *bunka eiga* producers concluded that *Lifeline of*

the Sea was not a *bunka eiga* but Kamei Fumio and Shirai Shigeru's *Through the Angry Waves* (Dottō o kette; 1937) was—despite the two films' being very nearly identical in terms of structure and content.[22] There is no question that the term originally came from Ufa's *Kulturfilme,* which were imported by Kawakita Nagamasa at Towa starting in 1930. These were basic science films for the education market, and the term was probably first used for Japanese-produced films by the Education Ministry. It was legislated into common use with the Film Law of 1939, giving the nonfiction form a boost by officially inserting documentary into the larger discourses about "Japanese culture."

The popular sense of the word *bunka* as either "refinement and cultivation" or "system of beliefs and customs" came only in the 1910s and 1920s. Its currency in popular consciousness marked a shift away from the Meiji era's emphasis on *bunmei,* or "civilization." Put another way, whereas Meiji civilization made practical education and devotion to nation building its goals, the new culture of Taishō expressed a newfound individualism wrapped up in self-refinement *(kyōyō).* H. D. Harootunian writes:

> Middle-class intellectuals, on whom the idea of *bunka* and *kyōyō* conferred aristocratic values and elite status, pitted culture and refinement against the threatening claims of mass culture—consumption and consumerism, and feared "secularization" and democratization of cultural life itself which the emergence of new classes in the Taishō period had promised to promote. The high-minded cultural aspiration of Taishō intellectuals was to defend *bunka* before the onslaught of debasement which the masses promised to bring in their wake, a shared posture promoting the rejection of politics as the surest defense of culture.[23]

In the end, this posture resulted in a conflation of culture and politics that emerged in force from the late 1920s to the time of the Film Law. As Japan became increasingly isolated in the world with its expansion across Asia, the values attached to "culture" came under interrogation and the associations connected to the word transformed.[24] The *bunka* of *bunka eiga* signaled a return of the demand for disciplined, self-sacrificing dedication to nonpersonal goals serving the development of the nation, even while retaining traces of the previous era's concept of culture as an elitist bulkhead against the vagaries of popular culture. This was precisely the spin given *bunka eiga* as it was defined in the glossary of film terms appended to Prokino's *Puroretaria Eiga no Chishiki* (Proletarian film knowledge) in 1932. As one would expect, Prokino members were highly attuned to the ideological nuances of words; the entry for *bunka eiga* reads as follows: "Films made for class culture, not for the political motives of agitprop. For example, astronomy films, medical films, etc."[25]

For Prokino writers, the *kiroku eiga* was the film of politics and social engagement. Outside of Prokino, however, the meanings behind such terms were thoroughly confused, providing quite a few writers fodder for criticism. Imamura Taihei, for example, devoted an entire chapter of his 1940 book *Kiroku Eigaron* (On documentary film) to differentiating *kiroku eiga* (document film) from *bunka eiga,* concluding that they are basically the same and that the latter appellation simply fosters confusion and misunderstandings about the nature of nonfiction film.[26] A year later, Nishimura Masami claimed *bunka eiga* for the amateur film world in his 1941 history of small-gauge film.[27] Some mainstream fiction filmmakers also wondered why their films were not considered "culture."[28] Always the rebel, Iwasaki Akira offered the most insightful observation, asserting that the rather arbitrary use of the word *culture* was nothing other than an aestheticization of capitalism for the sake of "national policy."[29] This comment, made in 1936, presciently predicted the propagandistic destiny of the *bunka eiga.*

In the rather indistinct period between the so-called *henshū eiga* and *bunka eiga,* two documentary cinemas formed around the standard news film and the newer brand of nonfiction. Although the producers and cameramen shared common codes, they lived in very separate worlds.[30] There was little communication between them, even after they were forced together with the integration of the film industry after the Film Law. They entered the industry through separate gates, learned their crafts under the tutelage of previous generations committed to their particular forms, and naturally ended up with different assumptions about the role of film in depicting the lived world. As it happened, news film producers based their approach to cinema on the events themselves, whereas the new filmmakers relied on scripts and imagined structures. The latter would be the path of the so-called *bunka eiga.*

After 1934, the *henshū eiga* became only one of many kinds of documentaries, although Yokohama Cinema's Aochi Chūzō continued the genre with *Japan Advancing to the North* (Hokushin Nippon; 1934), *The Southern Cross Beckons* (Minami jūjisei wa maneku; 1937), and *Holy War* (Seisen; 1938). The *henshū eiga* quickly lost its transitional quality, settling into the familiar form known as the compilation film. This approach was a favorite strategy for propaganda films such as *China Incident* (Shina jihen; 1938), which strove to explain the history of the conflict through the images collected by news photographers. None of these films are as interesting as the increasing number of prominent documentaries released starting in 1935, especially *Black Sun* (Kuroi taiyō; 1935), *Mikkyōsei River* (Mikkyōseigawa; 1936), and *Barga Grasslands* (Sōgen Baruga; 1936). The

first of these three films used innovative telescopic cinematography to record an eclipse of the sun. It was shot for Asahi Shinbun by Miki Shigeru, Mizoguchi Kenji's cameraman, who would soon shoot some of the most important documentaries of the war period and become a frequent commentator on nonfiction cinema.

Mikkyōsei River and *Barga Grasslands* were produced by the film unit of the Manchurian Railway Company.[31] After Japan began its colonization, the government started a campaign to encourage immigration to the new land. The Southern Manchurian Railway Company (Mantetsu), the initial epicenter of the Manchurian Incident, began producing its own travelogues. It produced many silent films with a common structure designed to "sell Manchuria" to prospective entrepreneurs: beginning with the Manchurian Incident, they showed the founding of the new Manchurian state and enthronement of Pu Yi, followed by scenes of a peaceful land crisscrossed by luxurious trains and home to classy hotels, mining, shipping, and other attractive business opportunities—not to mention lots of open space, which is constantly emphasized through long shots of expansive plains. Other immigration films were aimed at farmers and focused on the broad continent's possibilities for a new life.

Akutagawa Kōzō made the most significant of these films. Like so many documentary filmmakers, he came to filmmaking indirectly. He initially worked in a different office at Mantetsu for six years, then worked as a journalist before returning to Mantetsu to take charge of the filmmaking unit. He produced large-scale propaganda films promoting national policy, such as *The Railway and New Manchuria* (Tetsuro shin Manshū; 1936), *Mantetsu's 30 Years* (Mantetsu sanjūnen; 1936), and *Pioneering Shock Troops* (Kaitaku totsugekitai; 1936). However, he is best remembered for his films about life in Manchuria, especially *Barga Grasslands* and *Nyan nyan myao hoe* (Rōrō byokai; also known as *Nyan nyan musume*; 1940). These films cover the festivals, lifestyles, and history of the Manchurian people, and although they include some of the propaganda-like aspects of the Mantetsu public relations films, their value is greatly enhanced by their stunning ethnographic qualities.[32]

The Manshū Eiga Kyōkai (Manchurian Motion Picture Association, or Man'ei) also made a significant body of nonfiction film under the leadership of Amakasu Masahiko.[33] These films achieved some fame if only because they were lost for so many years, although another factor could be Amakasu's own notoriety for being the police officer sentenced to ten years (his sentence was later halved) for strangling anarchists Ōsugi Sakae and his wife Itō Noe after the Tokyo earthquake in 1923. In any case, there were rumors that the Soviets confiscated the entirety of Man'ei's catalog

at the end of the war, but historians' efforts to find the films were unsuccessful for many years. After 1989, it seems financial pressures made the Russian archives more penetrable, and a Japanese company "discovered" the films and bought "the rights" to the Man'ei documentaries for video distribution in Japan. Now that they are available for perusal, it is evident their reputation was inflated. Outside of Katō Tai's curious *Lice Are Frightening* (Shirami wa kowai; 1944), which urges better personal hygiene on the part of local Chinese with an outrageous mix of microscopy and animated lice, the Man'ei documentaries are hardly as interesting as their fiction film counterparts featuring Li Hsianglan (Ri Ko Ran, or Shirley Yamaguchi) and Hasegawa Kazuo.

The year following the China Incident in July 1937 marked a watershed for documentary. Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* (Olympische Spiele 1936; 1938) was distributed throughout Japan, opening many people's eyes to the potential of documentary as a new form of art. Shirai Shigeru accompanied a battleship to England for *Through the Angry Waves,* a Photo Chemical Laboratory film edited by newcomer Kamei Fumio. In 1938, PCL merged with JO Studios to form Toho, whose culture film unit would become one of the main producers of documentary film until the end of the war. Toho's cameramen accompanied troops as the war spread across the continent, and in 1938 the studio released three documentaries on an ambitious scale never before seen in the Japanese film industry. The three productions formed a trilogy describing the three major cities in China: *Shanghai* (shot by Miki Shigeru and edited by Kamei Fumio), *Nanking* (photographed by Shirai Shigeru and edited by Akimoto Takeshi), and *Peking* (shot by Kawaguchi Shōichi and edited by Kamei). *Nanking* and *Peking* were produced by former Prokino member Matsuzaki Keiji.

Toho's vast output included other films detailing the events on the mainland, such as *Fighting Soldiers* (Tatakau heitai; 1939), edited by Kamei. This impressive film concentrates more on the difficulties of life on the continent—for both Chinese and Japanese—than on heroics, and it was subsequently banned and lost for decades. A number of films from Toho expressed the rough life of rural Japanese, including Miki Shigeru's *Living by the Earth* (Tsuchi ni ikiru; 1939), *Village without a Doctor* (Isha no inai mura, directed by Itō Sueo and photographed by Shirai Shigeru; 1940), and Kamei's *Inabushi* (1941) and *Kobayashi Issa* (1941). The latter two were the first installments of a trilogy, but Kamei got into trouble once again with his hard, honest perspective in *Issa,* and the third film was never made.

It was also in 1938 that one of the most prolific producers of large-scale documentary was formed, Geijutsu Eigasha (GES). GES did its own



Figure 5. *Record of a Nursery.* Courtesy of Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, Tokyo Office.

documentary on the hardships of rural life, Ishimoto Tōkichi's *Snow Country* (Yukiguni; 1939). This proved to be one of the first Japanese documentaries that critics considered to have achieved the level of art. GES was also known for *Train C57* (Kikansha C57; 1941), *Young Soldiers of the Sky* (Sora no shōnenhei; 1942), and *Record of a Nursery* (Aru hobo no kiroku; 1942). The studio also became the focal point for much of the theoretical discourse on documentary, thanks to its magazine *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* (Study of culture film). The magazine was renamed *Bunka Eiga* (Culture film) when the government forced the amalgamation of the press in 1941, and the editor of both incarnations was none other than Prokino's Sasa Genjū. Sasa was one of several Prokino members who found an intellectual haven in GES. Atsugi Taka was a screenwriter there, and also translated many influential foreign articles on documentary, not least of which was Paul Rotha's *Documentary Film*.

Riken Kagaku (Science Film Stock Corporation, or Riken) brought the science film to a new level, particularly through the work of Shimomura Kenji. Films such as *The Birds at the Foot of Mount Fuji* (Fujisan-roku no tori; 1940) and *The Cuckoo* (Jihi shinchō; 1942) revealed a meticulous attention to the details of animal life. Shimomura is remembered especially for the self-reflexive look at life at the seashore in *On the Beach at Ebb Tide* (Aru hi no higata; 1940). During the Pacific War, Riken

produced a few recruitment films, most prominent of which was *Foundation of Victory* (Shōri no kiso; 1942), but Riken filmmakers are remembered most for their science and culture films.

The most prolific production house for straightforward propaganda documentary was Nippon Eigasha (Japan Film Company), or Nichiei, formed from several production houses when the government forced amalgamation of the industry in 1940. In addition to unifying the production of newsreels under one name, Nichiei used its powerful organization and capital to produce some of the more impressive documentaries of the war. Its filmmakers reassembled news footage into large-scale battle records in films such as *Malayan War Front: A Record of the March Onward* (Marē senki: Shingeki no kiroku; 1942), *Malayan War Front: The Birth of Shonan Island* (Marē senki: Shōnan-tō tanjō; 1942), and *War Report from Burma* (Biruma senki; 1942). Nichiei's *Oriental Song of Victory* (Tōyō no gaika; 1942) was one of the first large-scale coproductions with one of the colonies, in this case the Philippines. *Attack to Sink* (Gochin; 1944), which was shot on a submarine, was one of the most spectacular war films made, although watching it one would never have guessed that the tide of war had long before turned against Japan.

One does get a feeling of impending doom, however, in the urgency of some of the last home-front films. *Evacuation* (Sōkai; 1944) shows the enormous scale of evacuations and civil defense procedures being undertaken as American bombers reached the home islands with their incendiary bombs. *Bomb Blast and Shrapnel* (Bakufū to danpen; 1944) brought the Riken science film and civil defense films into an odd marriage. The film goes into incredible detail, showing the filmmakers blowing up bombs of various sizes, and showing the effects of shrapnel and blast on wooden walls, *shoji,* and small, unfortunate animals sacrificed for the sake of science and civil defense. *We Are Working So So Hard* (Watashitachi wa konna ni hataraite iru; 1945) was one of the last documentaries of the war. Its portrait of a women's uniform factory is infused with an urgency about the state of the war. The narrator cries, "Even though we work so so hard, why, just why does Japan not win?" On the screen, workers desperately whip together uniforms in a fast- and slow-motion dance. Six weeks after the release of *We Are Working So So Hard,* Hiroshima and Nagasaki lay in ruins.

Conventions Coalesce: The Film Law and a Sense of Mission

The history of the Japanese documentary in the 1930s and 1940s offered above is breathtakingly compressed and hardly the whole story. Literally

thousands of nonfiction films were produced in this period. Of these, I have been able to mention only a select few. These are the films that generally appear in Japanese film histories as representative and "important." Some of them have been remembered because of the critical or popular response they received upon release, whereas others are recognized primarily because of the reputations of their producers. Many constitute a canon of films continually referred to in postwar histories of the documentary, and quite a few of these depend upon the revival of memory through screenings by the National Film Center of Japan and the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival (as well as their respective catalogs). My selection has been based on a combination of all of these factors. However, rather than fill these pages with lists of films, I will take this skeletal history and dress it with close textual analysis, coverage of the major theoretical and practical discussions, and discussion of documentary's relationship to other discourses, such as the fiction film and government legislation.

The most important factor left out of the gloss above is the Film Law of 1939, which represents a landmark in the Japanese government's bid to control the film industry. Because other historians have described the substance of the Film Law at great length, I will focus here less on details of the letter of the law than on the law's deep effects on the film world, from its reach into the daily lives of film workers to its impact on film style.[34] Cinema was the only mass medium subjected to a comprehensive control law, which suggests the authorities conferred upon it a privileged place in mobilization of the population.[35] Support for the Film Law was equally comprehensive, as it was enacted through the combined efforts of the Home Ministry, the Education Ministry, the military, the Cabinet Information Board, and the Diet. The law prescribed a moral ground designed to orient filmmakers, an orientation guaranteed through censorship and other structures of surveillance. In effect, it explicated the hardening public discursive field, as can be seen in its core tenets. It proscribed the following:

> That which may profane the dignity of the Imperial House or injure the dignity of the Empire
> That which may inculcate ideas which offend national laws
> That which may obstruct general politics, military affairs, foreign policies, economics and other public interests
> That which may corrupt morals or undermine public moral principles
> That which may strikingly injure the purity of the Japanese language
> Remarkably awkward technical production
> That which may hinder the development of the national culture[36]

The year after enactment of the law, a new item aimed at squelching attempts at producing anything close to an antiwar film was added:

> That which may obstruct the enlightening propagation of the basics of the execution of national policy

Feature films were censored at the level of scenario, but documentaries escaped scrutiny until the postproduction stage. The concept of the use of scenarios for documentary cinema was only beginning to circulate in the Japanese film industry; because the concept was not widespread, no one thought to attempt to censor documentaries until they were near completion. Documentaries were also graced with other, even more significant benefits. The inspection fees for the censorship process were waived for nonfiction subjects, and the Film Law formalized the Education Ministry's film recognition system. The ministry had been recommending certain films it approved of for some time, but the government's formal recognition of the system gave it far more prestige. A cash prize was attached, and any film rejected by the ministry—such as Kamei Fumio's *Kobayashi Issa*—encountered difficulty in arranging public screenings.

By far the most important provision of the Film Law for documentary was the following phrase: "The responsible minister can arrange by decree for the screening by film exhibitors of a specified kind of film that benefits public education."[37] This essentially meant the "forced screening" *(kyōsei jōei)* of "films (excluding fiction films) that contribute to the cultivation of the national spirit or the development of the national intellectual faculties, recognized as such by the Minister of Education." Here is a definition of documentary that has come a long way from Grierson's "creative treatment of actuality." In practical terms, the forced screening of what the government deemed documentary meant a policy requiring all theaters to include a minimum of 250 meters of nonfiction film in any motion picture program. This order resulted in explosive growth for the documentary. In 1939, the Education Ministry recognized 985 documentaries; the following year the figure jumped to 4,460.[38] There were even theaters devoted entirely to the screening of nonfiction films. These government reforms jump-started the so-called golden age of the Japanese documentary, a golden age with a dark horizon.

The news film producers were the first to feel the rumblings of change, beginning with the merger of the four major news film companies under the umbrella of a single company, Nichiei, in 1940.[39] The company grew swiftly. Upon establishment, its budget was two million yen; in 1941 it

grew to three million, and by 1942 it had exceeded seven million yen.[40] During the Pacific War, in addition to its documentaries and its regular newsreel, *Nippon News,* the company produced separate newsreel versions for the Philippines, Malaya, Thailand, French Indochina, Burma, and Chinese regions "to inform the present inhabitants of the glorious victories of the imperial troops and open their eyes to the great ideal of the co-prosperity sphere."[41] This kind of attitude, structural amalgamation, and rapid growth spread throughout the film industry. Eventually, the ten major film studios were reduced to three, and more than two hundred documentary production companies were combined into three primary firms: Riken (made up of fourteen firms), Asahi Film Company (made up of eight firms), and Dentsū Film Stock Corporation (four firms).[42] The smaller production companies were bought out or strangled by the new controls over film stock, and by 1942 the film distributors and importers merged into monopolies.

Until the late 1930s, it was the newspaper companies that drove the development of the nonfiction film, not the major film studios. In this early era of newspaper-sponsored newsreels and *henshū eiga,* filmmakers were not completely free to report things as they wished. However, after the Film Law took effect they had to work under even greater controls. Nichiei, for example, was essentially close to a government-run monopoly. Part of the bureaucracy's strategy appears to have been to separate the distribution and production sectors of the industry, to eliminate competition and the commercialization of content their connection inevitably fosters. Significantly, this structural renovation coincided with and paralleled the plans to separate management and capital in the New Economic Order movement (1940–41). The studios—especially the powerful ones—struggled against this amalgamation and regulation to the extent they were able. Through a series of notorious meetings with government representatives the largest companies were able to negotiate for their survival, but their loss of control over much of their business was inevitable. The bureaucracy achieved its design most completely in the realm of documentary; the level of control exerted over news films is revealed by the fact that between 1939 and 1942 not a single frame was excised by censors.[43] Clearly, the state was successfully exerting its power in the public sphere without deploying violent repressive apparatuses.

One might ask how the Japanese film world reacted to the Film Law, at least the critics, who were in the best position to vocalize their opinions. Surprisingly, the film world offered less protest than one might expect, given such massive changes. Writers looked back at where they had come from with some nostalgia and wondered how cinema should proceed in the future. This sense of an ending is palpably represented in an unusual film

produced by the makers of *Asahi World News* (Asahi sekai nyūsu) when they were forced to cease production after making 330 news films. The film, titled *History of the Development of News Film: After Rapid Progress* (Nyūsu eiga no hattatsushi: Yakushin no ato; 1940) is a compilation salvage documentary of an unusual sort, as it includes famous scenes from the history of nonfiction film: the Russo-Japanese War, well-known sumo wrestlers, the Lindberghs in Japan, the South Pole expedition. We can thank the producers of this compilation for preserving footage from a few films that would otherwise have been lost to history. The structure of the film also reveals something about the course of documentary history in Japan. It is divided into periods—Meiji, Taishō, Shōwa. In the parts of the film addressing the first two periods, the historical events and the visual documents that record them for posterity are presented chronologically; however, the proliferation of form and subject matter that occurred during the Shōwa era made a simple chronological presentation of that period impossible. Instead, the part of the film devoted to the Shōwa period is subdivided into themes such as politics, arts, and sports. Judging from the studio's in-house newsletter devoted to the film's production, this was the first time the filmmakers had gone back to their old footage in a retrospective mode. The newsletter reveals the filmmakers' feelings of nostalgia for their many news films; it also shows that they were not ready to quit, although there was nothing they could do in the face of the Film Law.[44]

Of course, looking back in nostalgia did little for filmmakers in the midst of the confusing restructuring of their industry. With a new system "recognizing" *bunka eiga*—this becoming virtually the only way to achieve significant distribution—a debate ensued about what this new definition would mean for the future of documentary. However, the Film Law was vague concerning any positive program of action for the nation's film leadership. Filmmakers seem to have had an easier time couching their discussion in the negative terms of the law itself. Nagata Shin, for example, had a sense primarily of what documentary film would *not* be in the future:

> Simply put, it is not a meaningless record, nor an actuality-like thing, or some high-level science that cannot be understood without acquiring specialized knowledge, and it does not mean films about academic subjects; it means films about the national culture, or you could say those that truly enlighten. Furthermore, they must not lack cinema's popularity, and yet they must still have the recognition of the Education Minister to be called *bunka eiga* and be the object of designated screenings. This is how it is understood.[45]

If one reads between the lines, one can see that filmmakers did some degree of grumbling about the situation, without necessarily appearing to criticize the developments. Although there were some cheerleaders for the

new law, few could offer any concrete information about what was in store. Many tended to fall back on predictable New Order catchphrases; for example:

> Now that four companies have merged into one, it is said that there is no competition, no excitement, and that this tendency will provide meager results. However, the position of the news company's news production today is different from that of the past. . . . Previously, we were at such incredible pains to find the news flash that there was a tendency to forget many other matters of national importance. A news flash is a news flash, but above all, from the alternative perspective of national policy, we must build a spirit of leadership *[shidōseishin]*.[46]

The age of free competition between companies was over, and now they would pool their strength and resources to lead a "public mission." From the point of view of those tightening the grip on public representation, this mission overpowered all the other functions of the documentary and provided one of the few ways in which they attempted to couch their agenda more positively. As Furuno Inosuke, president of Nichiei and member of the board of many New Order organizations, wrote: "Put in the simplest terms, the mission of Nippon Eigasha is the accomplishment of the national mission held by cinema; there is nothing outside of this. This is the only motive for Nippon Eigasha's existence."[47] Documentary had become a "weapon in the thought war" *(shisōsen)*. The language of warfare mixed liberally with the language of nationalism, and film producers began to speak of how they could most easily achieve national policy by thinking of the three phases of filmmaking—production, distribution, exhibition—as a "single bullet."[48] The head of Nichiei's planning department broke documentary's mission down into categories that included "reportage of war results," "elevating the fighting spirit," "construction of the co-prosperity sphere," "exhaustive examination of national policy," and, ultimately, "successful completion of the Greater East-Asia War"—quite a tall order for any national cinema.[49]

The Co-optation of Prokino

The Film Law and the amalgamation of the film industry into a New Order *(shintaisei)* led to the co-optation of Prokino's conception of cinema and in some respects its practice as well. These reforms of the industry in accordance with the growing exertion of power in the public arena came after a period when the social function of the nonfiction film had been neglected, at least from the perspective of some in the industry. For example,

Matsuo Yōji analyzed the content of newsreels in 1935 for an article in *Eiga to Gijutsu* and found that by far the most common items were sports and military matters, followed by children, animals, festivals, and the like. He concluded by writing, "The reason we are not impressed by today's newsreels compared to Prokino's *Yamasen's Funeral in Kyoto [sic]* and *Mayday [sic]* is that the filmmakers' vision of their own society is blurred."[50] Prokino's efforts at the newsreel consciously (and conscientiously) filled in the gaps left in the news as presented by the large corporations. In one of the Prokino readers, Kamimura Shūkichi explained:

> Newsreels attempt to play the role of "Our Newspaper" in the sphere of the cinema. In other words, the XX image of every moment of the workers and farmers—their strikes, demonstrations, revolts, etc.—and the XX, educating propaganda of those who oppose this—their national entertainment, yearly events, noisy festivals, and reactionary institutions—will be quickly and properly photographed, and then brought into the factories and fields.[51]

With a few vocabulary revisions—and with those *fuseji X*'s replaced by jingoistic expressions—this passage could easily be taken to represent the perspective of the bureaucrats several short years later. Indeed, a number of the film journalists who expounded on the future of documentary were former Prokino members themselves.

This thread of rhetorical continuity between Prokino and the New Order can be found readily in post–Film Law film criticism.[52] A typical example is Fuwa Suketoshi's 1939 "Bunka Eiga no Shimei to Hōkō" (Culture film's mission and direction) from *Nippon Eiga*—a neat package of resonances with the previous work of the proletarian film movement.[53] Fuwa participated in the drafting of the Film Law and worked in the Education Ministry's Social Education Section. He also furnished some of the more vigorously nationalistic writing in film magazines of the war period and wrote two books: *Eiga Kyōiku no Shosō* (Various aspects of film education) and *Eigahō Kaisetsu* (Explanatory notes for the Film Law).[54] Fuwa published his article on the occasion of the Film Law and celebrated the discussion it had provoked. Just as Prokino activists had reasoned before him, he asserted that talk of producing cinematic masterpieces would have to wait for the future. At the present moment, "it cannot be denied that cinema further lifts social consciousness *[ninshiki]* as reflected in national cultural policy."[55] Fuwa's gloss on film history was essentially the same as Murayama's a decade before: "As everyone knows, because it was developed as an entertainment product at the beginning, cinema generally came to join amusements that stimulated the senses, and was simply an industrialism's object of pleasure calling out to the masses."[56] Now it was up to

committed filmmakers to bring a social and political mission to the cinema in a new age when a certain ideology was being emphasized in motion pictures. As noted in chapter 2, the members of Prokino gravitated toward the documentary because of their vision of a social role for cinema. Fuwa also argued that the documentary method is much better suited than the fiction film to enlightening the masses of citizens. He simply replaced Prokino's identification with class with a homogenized, reified nation:

> The key to *bunka eiga* is based on the correct recognition and understanding of the culture. First, more than anything else, I have great expectations that the various features of Japanese culture can be known through the *bunka eiga*. At once, culture is no longer an abstraction, but something borne only in specific circumstances, as the culture of a living citizenry and a living nation. Therefore, our spiritual treasure is nothing other than culture itself, the utmost, concrete expression of our national spirit, our national ideal.[57]

Fuwa substituted the internationalism of Prokino's politics with a qualitatively different particularism that still relied heavily on an international perspective and comparison. As cinema was drawn into the heart of the mission of the nation and rearranged to fit its New Order, this machinery belonging to an international industrialism somehow had to become nationalized and particularized. Because a nation expresses its particularity through its culture, cinema had to tap into this wellspring of national spirit to achieve its mission. This was not a simple matter of turning the camera toward "things Japanese." Like many of his fellow critics, Fuwa found a useful example in the films of Richard Angst, a German director who traveled to Japan to shoot films in the late 1930s. Fuwa asserted that the Mount Fuji shot by Angst was not the Mount Fuji of the Japanese people's feelings, and that a German filmmaker's shots of Japanese soldiers singing were different from scenes of the same soldiers singing in Japanese news films. Fuwa suggested that foreign filmmakers' depictions of Japan were similar to the "degenerate bad taste" shown by foreign hotels when they attempted to create Japanese-style rooms.

It may very well be that Angst's films seemed strange to Japanese viewers—we can certainly imagine the power of this argument for readers in 1939—but Fuwa's next example reveals the rhetorical acrobatics that were part of this nationalization of cinema. Fuwa criticized a tourist film about Kabuki that was produced for foreign consumption. The film was a simple record of the famous Kagamijishi dance as performed by Kikugorō VI, but Fuwa judged that it "had no cinematic method" because foreign producer and Japanese performer cannot meet perfectly and completely (here he seems to presage the postwar emphasis on the union of filmic *taishō* [ob-

ject] and filmmaker *shutai* [subject], suggesting that this staple of postwar documentary film theory has roots in wartime thinking): "If the director truly knew the art of Kikugorō VI, if he could shoot that Japanized stage and performance from a Japanese sensibility, he would have photographed a magnificent Kagamijishi."[58] It is ironic that this "foreign" film that Fuwa criticized as incapable of penetrating the spirit of Japanese culture was actually Ozu Yasujirō's only documentary—ironic not only because Ozu is Japanese, but because he was touted as *particularly* Japanese in the postwar period.[59] This passage reveals the work that some Japanese critics put into imagining the "national" cinema.

The co-optation of Prokino exceeded this kind of critical rhetoric. The Cabinet Information Board's unified control of the film industry reached the most remote parts of the country when it took movies "to the farms, fishing villages and the factories" with the founding of the Japan Mobile Projection League (Nippon Idō Eisha Renmei) in 1943.[60] This organization consolidated the efforts of various studios, newspapers, and independent organizations to "enlighten" the rural masses by bringing the movies to their doorsteps. Local branches of the league were even established. The army took the Prokino model of a film "movement" and brought its own films to the villages through mobile units. Its "Uchite shi yamamu" Eiga Undō—which could be translated as the "We Shall Smite Them and Be Done" Film Movement[61]—assembled nearly one hundred projection teams, each taking a week's worth of films to every corner of the nation.[62] *Uchite shi yamamu* is a phrase taken from several songs recorded in the eighth-century *Kojiki,* so they were dressing their very modern movement in a reference to wars in the nation's ancient past.

Around the same time, the powerful critic Imamura Taihei was calling for science films and *bunka eiga* to be brought into the daily lives of citizens *(kokumin no nichijō seikatsu ni irikomu)*—a nationalized variation of the Prokino slogan.[63] Furthermore, the growing need for mass mobilization, combined with the strictures and charter of the Film Law, resulted in films that were closer to those produced by Prokino than to the products of the newspaper companies. Both Prokino films and the films that were made on the cusp of enactment of the Film Law filled their intertitles with inflammatory rhetoric and often used graphic excess to accompany their sloganlike text. They privileged the act of public speaking and used the spectacle of mass movements of people to solicit identification with a larger group (nation and race, as opposed to class). Finally, both referred constantly to an omnipresent state: one in the form of the oppressive police and the other in the vague nonpresence of the emperor.

Daily Life behind the Screen

The history of the documentary in Japan through the fourteen years between the Manchurian Incident and surrender looks like a gradual arc from commercial competition to state propaganda, punctuated by the establishment of the Film Law. We may be concerned primarily with how the codes permissible in public discourse were manifested in the documentaries of the day, but the world on-screen and the world of the filmmakers were inextricably linked. Because of the nature of filmmaking, the incremental crystallization of discourse in the public gaze reached into the daily lives of film workers. Documentary documented the world before the camera as well as the world of the cameraman; that is, the lives of those who made films were molded by a set of hardening conventions, just as films were.

The Film Law enabled the government to begin regulating the world behind the screen far beyond the usual tools of censorship. The law allowed employers to define proper behavior and dress for film workers in great detail. For example, the company handbook given to all Nichiei employees formalized and regulated a wide spectrum of the employees' daily activities. The handbook laid out a spectrum of hierarchical roles determined by seniority and gave detailed information for employees at each level, such as how much allowance they would receive on shooting and research trips, the classes of train they should take on their commutes, and the kinds of clothes they should wear to work.[64] Riken's rule book for military matters, "Gunki Hoji Narabi ni Gun Kankei Sagyōsha ni Kan Suru Chūi Jiko" (List of matters requiring special attention for employees working on military matters and for protecting military equipment), instructed employees to be careful about military secrets, never to share information outside of the company sphere, and to avoid taking personal cameras into military factories and schools. These may all seem like commonsense precautions. However, the rule book also covered smaller matters:

> Take care to give a respectful bow to soldiers.
> Bow when entering a room, and never fail to take off hat.
> At work clothing should be uniforms, no scarves etc.
> When getting on a bus, the people of lower status must sit in back, but they must get on the bus after people of superior status get off the bus, and this company's employees are treated as lower-status people.[65]

The Film Law also involved direct management through its requirement that everyone in the film industry—from cameramen to projectionists—have a license to work.[66] The Greater Japan Film Association, which had promoted the passage of the comprehensive law, was charged with administering competency tests and thus became a quasi-governmental organ. Among the questions from a 1942 test: "Our country has an exalted national polity unmatched throughout the world. Why? Since the eruption of the Greater East Asian War, the imperial armed forces have won consecutive victories, and now America and Britain are absolutely incapable of laying a hand on the Far East. However, it is said that 'the real battle remains for the future.' Why?"[67] Such pat questions required pat answers. As in any situation where public communications become simultaneously conventionalized and the conduit for increasingly severe power relations, life in the film world required performances of obedience.

These performances in daily life included things like meetings and marches. This is a point where the workplace of the film studio overlapped with many other walks of life, and the documentary filmmakers left many images of these gatherings from factories, schools, farms, and military settings. The archival records of Riken are filled with meeting agendas that read like performance programs. These schedules all conform to the same basic pattern, a structure that homogenizes the company space into the national sphere. Each meeting began with a salute or bow toward the direction of the emperor, and then the filmmakers sang nationalistic songs, performed some business, and closed with a banzai. Here is a typical meeting agenda:

Agenda for Celebration of the First Battle Assemble at 11:30 A.M.

- Salute/Bow
- Pray to Imperial Palace
- Bow of Respect for Imperial Troops and Spirits of the War Dead
- Sing National Anthem
- Reading Imperial Edict
- Speech by Company Leader
- Banzai 18 February 1942[68]

On this particular day, the filmmakers were obligated to take a trip together to the Imperial Palace to pay their respects to the emperor, a scene repeated over and over in the documentaries they produced (typically as the climactic ending):

Agenda for Great March of Appreciation for the Imperial Troops, Prayer for Completion of the Great East-Asian War and Celebration of the First Battle (18 February 1942)

1. 18 February 1942, 12:30 P.M., assemble at Main Office
2. March to Imperial Palace; pray to Palace
3. March to Yasukuni Shrine; pray to Yasukuni Shrine
4. In Front of Iidabashi Station; dismissal (planned time: 3:30 P.M.)

Warning:

1. Group Practice: Follow the orders of the march conductor.
2. Each person should hold small flag.
3. Those who possess them, wear citizen uniform or defense group uniform; all others dress appropriately.
4. Except for those with emergencies, all employees must attend.[69]

Bearing down on this micromanaged sphere was the pressure of the reality of the war. This was one of the hazards of the filmmakers' job, and they were reminded of its dangers by the steady flow of reports about cameramen perishing at the front. For example, Nichiei announced the deaths of its company cameramen Muragishi Hakuzō and Kadoishi Hideo by sending printed cards to the various film studios; these were followed by printed invitations to a company funeral.[70] Muragishi died of gunshot wounds in Burma; Kadoishi drowned when his ship was sunk between the Philippines and China. Both had begun working for Nichiei only months before and were immediately sent to shoot footage of the activities at the front. Their deaths—no matter how coincidental, tragic, or pitiful—were converted to acts of heroism through glorious war rhetoric in the pages of *Bunka Eiga*.[71] Some fifty other filmmakers lost their lives while recording the war, but for all the footage they shot in the midst of the fighting, death could be represented only in the most indirect, aestheticized, metaphoric, or metonymic manner, as sanctioned by the style of the public sphere.

The Hardening of Style

The regulation and conventionalization of behavior in daily life and work coincided with a similar process in film style. As the *henshū eiga* led to a proliferation of documentary forms, from travelogues to educational films, a coincident "hardening" of style occurred. That is, although the "kinds"

of documentaries increased, they used approaches to photography and editing that were remarkably common across all forms of filmmaking. At one level, this probably represented the filmmakers' search for an adequate mode to represent the referential world. However, this hardening of style cannot be separated from its material basis in a society that became increasingly embroiled in international conflict and the domestic suppression of difference. It was the search for a form that provoked the identification of the spectator with the enunciation of the nation.

The field of literature provides one glimpse into what was expected of artists in a nation with a militarized aesthetic sensibility. Hino Ashihei wrote in a mode resembling the reportage of the documentary war cinema. He is best known for his trilogy consisting of the novels *Wheat and Soldiers, Flowers and Soldiers,* and *Mud and Soldiers.* An adaptation of the last of these was one of the most popular war films of the era. Under sponsorship of the army, Hino followed troops on their march across the Chinese continent, much as the documentary cameramen who preceded him had done from the time of the Boxer Rebellion on. Hino's reports were mass-produced for the home front. In this period when reportage emerged as a form of literature and film art, Hino's correspondence from the front was wildly popular. After the war, trying to justify his wartime writings, he said that he had been obligated to write under the following conditions (which are equally applicable to the cinema):

> The Japanese Army must never be described as losing a battle.
> The kinds of criminal acts that inevitably accompany warfare must not be alluded to.
> The enemy must always be portrayed as loathsome and contemptible.
> The full circumstances of an operation must not be disclosed.
> The composition of military units and their designations must not be disclosed.
> No expression of individual sentiments as human beings is permitted to soldiers.[72]

Starting with these expectations under which writers wrote and filmmakers filmed, we may begin to extrapolate the style that emerged from such stricture. The weakness of Hino's list is that it is pitched in exclusively negative terms, leaving the impression that these kinds of rules were the source of the style. In fact, the conventions were in place long before such top-down power was exerted directly on the creative process. The seeds of all the elements of Japan's public discursive style in this period are evident in one of the earliest (1933) feature-length documentaries, *Japan in Time*

of Crisis. This 150-minute *henshū eiga* sets out all the elements, some in nascent form. It is also an important film from a historical point of view, as it was entered as evidence against General Araki Sadao in the International Military Tribunal of the Far East, otherwise known as the Tokyo Trial. This makes it particularly interesting to scholars. A copy of the film is preserved at the U. S. National Archives, along with other evidence used in the trial, so this film is far more accessible to scholars than are other films found exclusively in Japan; the National Archives copy is also backed up by an unusual body of documentation in the form of trial transcripts.[73] Needless to say, information given by trial witnesses under cross-examination (especially during a trial in which the defendant was accused of plotting to conquer the world) should be regarded as less than completely trustworthy. Even so, the Tokyo Trial transcripts provide an undeniably unusual and interesting perspective on the film. Most important, however, the film is a virtual catalog of the hardening of film style as documentary developed through the 1930s.

The prosecution submitted *Japan in Time of Crisis* as evidence against Araki because of his narration, which structures the entire film as a kind of illustrated speech. At the Tokyo Trial, Araki was singled out as "one of the leading chauvinistic rabble-rousers in Japan," although producer Mizuno Shinkō testified that Araki had been chosen to narrate the film because senior editors at Mainichi Shinbun felt he "was the most moderate and the most neutral in his thinking."[74] In retrospect, Araki seems anything but moderate. As army minister from 1931 to 1934, he promoted the necessity of a strong military and an independent Manchurian state, filling crucial posts with sympathetic officers. The young officers of the Imperial Way faction gathered around Araki, connecting him to the attempted coup of the 26 February 1936 rising. As minister of education in 1938–39, he contributed to the militarization of Japan's education system. The prosecution at the Tokyo Trial submitted the film as evidence of Araki's intent to invade Asia and then take on the world, calling it a "propaganda film of a vicious type." After watching one reel, however, the president of the trial offered a more appropriate assessment: "That is a very disappointing production as far as the pictures go."[75] Indeed, the awkward filmmaking and remarkably twisted logic of the narration make *Japan in Time of Crisis* rather difficult to watch, but close analysis reveals the main characteristics of the wartime style in embryonic form.

Under cross-examination, Mizuno Shinkō gave three reasons Mainichi Shinbun took up the production: (1) educational purposes—the film was seen as a hybrid of a public speech and a textbook, and it was taken around Japan and screened for schoolchildren; (2) commercial purposes—at this

early date, Mainichi wanted to test the economic viability of long-form nonfiction cinema; and (3) political purposes—the company wanted to clear up confusion over the complicated situation in China and Japan's international politics.[76] The film received considerable attention in the educational film world. In *Katsuei,* one of the primary forums for film educators, Mizuno declared that this new film form—what he called the *kōenkatsuei*—would revolutionize the cinema in both form and spirit. He asserted that lecture films possess uncommon power and that they would work against the tendency of the film industry to "delude" itself into thinking "film = entertainment + profit."[77]

The explanation of recent history constitutes the overriding theme of the work, as the production rode the tails of Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations when the European powers protested the invasion of Manchuria. Broadly described, *Japan in Time of Crisis* addresses the whole of the Japanese people in order to explain the dangerous state of the nation in ambitiously comprehensive scope. With forays into the history of Japan's origins, the film's structure is complex, but it contains a chronological temporality running roughly from the Manchurian Incident to Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations. This chronological structure was typical of most war documentaries, which often took a diaristic form when limited to shorter spans of time. Perhaps related to the reportage literature of writers such as Hino, or perhaps a simple matter of limited imagination on the part of the filmmakers, this structure reveals an approach to documentary that emphasizes its scientific quality of recording reality and history's built-in temporality. This structure culminated in the *senki eiga* (battle record films) of the Pacific War, which closely followed the strategies and tactics used in the major battles in Southeast Asia without showing much of the actual fighting.

Japan in Time of Crisis has many battle scenes, but its violence is indirect and aestheticized. It is spectacle devoid of real violence. Throughout the war, photographic images of the conflict rarely ventured beyond the periphery of the fighting, displaying troops firing guns of various sizes and running across fields. In fact, battle scenes appear identical from film to film; they would be indistinguishable were it not for cues in the narration. The violence at the business end of the gun is replaced by far-off explosions. Another tool filmmakers used to accomplish this substitution and aestheticization was the animated map. Like their counterparts in Capra's "Why We Fight" series, these maps explain the strategies and geography of the battles at hand. However, American and Japanese movie maps part ways in one significant respect: the Japanese maps also function to elide photorealistic violence, making the fighting scenes acceptable for insertion

into public discourse. For example, when Araki explains the history of Japan's modern international conflicts, animated drops of blood fall on various historical hot spots on a map. As the blood drops hit the graphical ground, they splatter across the map and superimposed characters remind the audience of famous incidents involving the very real spilling of Japanese blood: "Our Sacrifice in the Sino-Japanese War," "Our Sacrifice in the Boxer Rebellion," "Our Sacrifice in the Russo-Japanese War," "Our Sacrifice in the Siberian Expedition." In contrast, Capra's *The Battle of China* (1943) shows Japanese swords plunging into the same geography, heightening the documentary images of horrifying violence that follow.

There is, in fact, a stunningly uniform pattern to the battle scenes in *Japan in Time of Crisis,* a delimited chronological progression analogous to the overall structure of the film, and one that would become a concrete formula of the newsreel and war documentary. First, there is a battle with rifles and big guns, and the accompanying sound track includes nothing but explosions and gunfire. Suddenly, the battle is over and the soldiers make an orderly march into the conquered city; officers usually lead the way on horses. The newly liberated civilians often line the parade route, waving Japanese flags (this happens even in the most obscure, poverty-stricken rural areas). Upon arrival, some of the Japanese troops perform a banzai atop the city walls. As an epilogue, the Japanese soldiers offer food and first aid to the conquered city's grateful populace. This pattern is repeated ad infinitum in the Japanese documentary films of the 1930s and 1940s, becoming something like a running joke from a contemporary perspective cognizant of what happened in the ellipses (see, for example, the newsreel describing the siege at Nanking in Figure 6).

How spectators read the pattern at the time can be gleaned from a fascinating article that appeared in *Eiga Kyōiku* (Film education) in 1938. The article was written by Shimano Sōitsu, who taught at an elementary school in Nara prefecture. Shimano's main point in the article is the importance of providing students with strong contextualization before and after they were shown films during school assemblies. To find out how his students understood the films they saw, he regularly took surveys of the students. In the article, he quotes paragraph-long student responses to a newsreel about the capture of Nanking, one selection from each grade. Starting with first grade and ending with sixth, the responses demonstrate how the children processed the relatively simple images in the film in increasingly complex ways as they got older:

> *Film on Nanking Attack:* Japanese soldiers fire cannons. They also fire rifles and machine guns. Chinese soldiers were hit by those bullets. I thought it



Figure 6. A narrative progression repeated in countless documentaries of the war. Asahi's special edition of *Asahi World News* (Asahi sekai nyūsu) reports the capture of Nanking (from upper left to lower right): title ("Japanese Flag Flies over Nanking Ramparts"), attack, banzai on the city wall, *datsubō* (order to remove one's hat respectfully), convergence of the troops, parade through the city gates.

> would be good if they surrender fast. When they captured Kōka Gate and yelled, "Banzai," I wanted to banzai, too. During the ceremony to enter Nanking City, all of the soldiers entered the city heroically. Seeing this I feel thankful for their working under such difficulties for so long all the way to the great city of Nanking.—I.M., first grade
>
> *Ceremony for the Triumphal Entry into Nanking:* Today was movie-watching day. I'm so, so happy it's unbearable. Everybody took chairs to the hall. There was a talk by the teacher until the film was shown. . . . watching the film on the China Incident, I came to realize how very strong Japanese soldiers are. They captured the place they got to, flew the Japanese flag on high and called out, "Banzai." Watching this yelling banzai scene, I also yelled banzai in my heart. Soldiers, thank you; you made a great attack for us. There are also a lot of men growing beards among the soldiers. I truly understand how hard they worked for us to make the really bad Chinese soldiers surrender. I also want to follow my teacher's teaching, grow up fast, become a splendid soldier, and serve my country to the best of my ability. Furthermore, I want to save up my spending money and contribute to national defense again and again.—H.M., third grade[78]

In these responses, one can palpably sense the reading protocols that couched the representations of battle scenes. Clearly, the teacher's speeches in the reception context pitched the images in a particular ideological framework. However, the striking repetition of convention—indeed, the interaction between repetition of convention and spectator—converts images like these of particular troops entering Nanking's city walls into iconic

representations of the nation pursuing its mission in Asia. Reported over countless films, their cumulative effect is a sense of unstoppable inertia, of the inevitability of success.

When the documentary displays groups of people, it projects a microcosm of the national structure, and hierarchy is made visual spectacle. These images of hierarchy are most clearly seen in sequences involving groups of soldiers, where officers are separated from the lower ranks spatially, often standing in front of the assembled soldiers for speeches or elevated vertically on platforms. Sometimes this spatial expression of hierarchy takes the form of who occupies privileged inside space and who remains outside, as in *Fighting Soldiers* and many other films. This difference is often narrativized as well. For example, in *Attack to Sink,* the officers and lower-ranked sailors live separate lives aboard their common submarine. When fish wash up on the top of the sub, they become dinner for the officers, while everyone else eats canned fish in the cramped mess; after successfully sinking a trade ship, the officers on the bridge invite the sweaty engineers from the bowels of the ship to look at the map and pictures of enemy ships to learn where they are and what they have been doing. In fiction films, one of the most powerful examples is found at the beginning of *Mud and Soldiers,* when a single set of orders is passed through the ranks, with sound/image dissolves at each baton touch (a direct adaptation from Hino's book).

Japan in Time of Crisis is marked by such visual elements and narrations of hierarchy. The battle scene structure described above maintains a clear difference between the Japanese liberators and the Chinese citizens, with the Chinese combatants excluded from on-screen space. The most striking images are of Araki himself. Poised before the Japanese flag, a uniformed attendant waiting to assist, Araki addresses the camera directly. In this visual chain of command—from national flag to Araki to assistant to spectator—we may discover the basic framework for a topology of the self and other in the style of the public sphere (Figure 7).

This issue is far more complex than it may first appear, especially in regard to images of the other. Many scholars who have analyzed Japanese war films have abruptly announced that "there is no enemy." Japanese filmmakers, they have argued, concentrated on images of the self to the exclusion of the other.[79] With the enemy relegated to offscreen space, Japanese war films were more humanistic than racist. This observation is partially dependent upon a postwar comparison of these films with their American counterparts. Hollywood filmmakers working in cooperation with various branches of the U.S. government produced a number of films that analytically picked apart the enemies on both fronts. American films of the Pacific

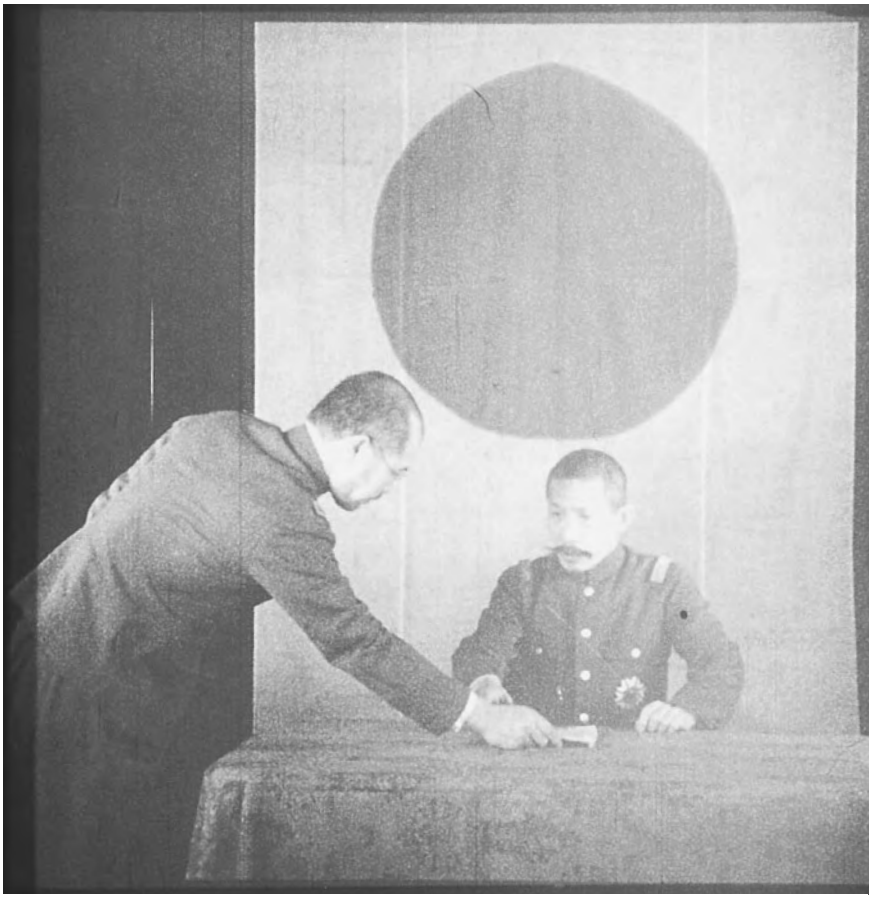


Figure 7. Iconographic chain of command: nation/Araki/assistant/spectator.

War included measured descriptions in educational films such as *The Geography of Japan* (1945) and *The Educational System of Japan* (1945). However, the films that most people remember are the jingoistic history lessons of Frank Capra's "Why We Fight" series and loud propaganda films like *Know Your Enemy: Japan* (1945). At the same time, one must remember that these films were special, even atypical. Most American war films gave only glimpses of the Japanese enemy from a distance, through deed and through discussion. Indeed, most of the American films that devote significant screen time to the enemy are from the end of the war, so we could say that the usual contrast between American and Japanese representations of the enemy also relies on a radical simplification of American documentary history.

Furthermore, it is also likely that Americans were in need of films that explained the history and "nature" of the enemy after years of isolationism

and simple ignorance, especially when it came to non-Western cultures. For their part, Japanese had been far less oblivious to the outside world in the twentieth century, especially after decades of study—not to mention the lessons of foreign cinema and Euro-American popular culture. To declare that Japanese war films have no enemy and stop there is to ignore important questions about *how* others are represented in these films. If there are no comparable principles central to the organization of American film style and structure, we have to look elsewhere. In fact, we simply have to *look and listen.* Anthropologist Ruth Benedict was hired by the U.S. government to analyze Japanese society through its cinema. Writing in 1944, before the idea of an absent enemy became critical convention, she easily summed up the stereotypes of the other she found in captured Japanese films:

> Throughout the examined films China is symbolized by an attractive but wayward and capricious female whereas Japan is represented by a courageous, steady, kind, and patient male. Asiatics in general are shown as fearful, suspicious, but also very curious about Japan and interested in learning more about Japan and the Japanese. Western culture is stereotyped as weak, decadent, and cowardly by identifying the weak and cowardly individuals with it. Weaklings, cowards, dissolute pleasure-seekers in *all* the twenty films examined wear Western clothes, smoke American cigarettes, like jazz, or have gone to school in the West. This clever manipulation of Western traits to associate them in the minds of the audience with weakness, selfishness, intrigue, and treachery, extends even to the leaders of the Chinese guerrillas who stress material as above spiritual values, gamble in the Western manner, and smoke American tobacco—with a subtle implication of their being servants of the West in the pursuit of their own selfish interests. Those natives . . . who cooperate with the Japanese are, on the other hand, stereotyped like the Japanese themselves, as strong, sensible, disciplined, and patriotic.[80]

Benedict analyzed only fiction films, but documentaries shared the same conventions. Japanese war films—documentary and fiction alike—were filled with enemies, often quite comparable to their counterparts in American films. For example, for characters equivalent to the bucktoothed caricatures of Hirohito in the "Why We Fight" series, we can look to animated films, which included infantilized portraits of Churchill, Chiang, and Roosevelt adrift in the Pacific and fighting over toy airplanes in *Nippon Banzai* (1943); the helpless FDR and Churchill in the *Young Ma's Paratroopers* (Mabō no rakkasanbutai; circa 1943); and a murderous Mickey Mouse in *Toybox Series No. 3: Picture Book 1936* (Omochabako shiriizu daisanwa: Ehon 1936 nen; 1934).

For a Japanese counterpart to the paranoia over enemy spies in John Ford's *December 7th* (1943), we could examine *Weapons of the Heart* (Kokoro no busō; 1942), which portrays home-front Japan as a battlefield

of espionage. The film warns that spies are everywhere, passing national secrets through elaborate schemes involving cigarettes and other innocent props. *Weapons of the Heart* represents foreigners in two broad styles: in the daily-life sequences, they appear dubiously "normal" while they undermine the Japanese government; their frightening true nature is expressed in dreamlike sequences in which a gnarled hand reaches out of the darkness of the screen into the darkness of the movie theater to terrorize the audience. The feature film *Tiger of Malaya* (Marē no tora; 1943) takes the thriller genre, combines it with a local Malayan legend, and converts it into a discourse on spies fighting against Japan. Furthermore, in many documentaries there is an aural counterpart to this imagistic paranoia in the near constant chorus, "*They* don't understand *us*." More typically, Japan's enemies are described as hateful, cruel, and ignorant of Japan's peaceful motives, at least until they are caught, when they become weak, ugly, and pitiful.

Film historians have often missed this aural representation of the enemy by privileging the image and ignoring the sound track. Occasionally, the sound tracks are quite amusing. For example, *Speaking of Youthful Japan* (1934) starts with a discourse on national flags (favorite symbols of Japan's enemies in both documentary and fiction film). The narration explains that many of the flags of Western Europe are tricolored, but they are defective because the rainbow has seven colors; Turkey has a crescent moon and the United States has stars, but both are incomplete because they represent night; Japan has the perfect flag because it represents the rising sun! *Oriental Song of Victory* (1942) ends with an image of FDR dissolving into an image of the American flag; through pixilation, the flag mysteriously starts to wrinkle and a third image emerges: Japanese boots marching over both the American president and the flag.

In fact, documentary images of the English and American enemies appear far more in Japanese documentaries than one would expect from reading the work of film historians. *Attack to Sink,* for example, has two scenes in which lone enemy sailors are pulled from the sea after their ships slipped into the ocean. As the Japanese officers interrogate their prisoners, the announcer on the sound track castigates them as "weak" and "immoral." *Malayan War Front: A Record of the March Onward* shows literally thousands of captured enemy soldiers being rounded up and put in camps. *Officers Who've Lost: Life of POWs* (Yaburetaru shōguntachi; circa 1942) and *Oriental Song of Victory* trot out captured soldiers and roundly denigrate them as weak, pitiful creatures with an ugly, degenerate culture. Classical music is singled out as an example of the vagaries of Western culture in the former film (this over images of a POW chorus

singing no less than Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus"). *Oriental Song of Victory* is filled with American and British POWs from start to finish, making it somewhat comparable to Capra's *Know Your Enemy.*

Although these enemy images appear to be more or less analogous to those in American war documentaries, what sets the Japanese cinema apart—making it considerably more complex—is the difficult position of other Asians in the scheme of things. Japanese may have modeled their foreign exploits on the activities of the most powerful nations, such as France and England, but Japan's colonies were established and maintained through a much different rhetoric. The day-to-day reality may have been similar for the colonized—their access to the metropole blocked, their ability to rise to positions of administrative power severely limited, their domestic culture infused with Japanese media, their resources devoted to Japan's modernization. However, for Japan the colonies did not have the same binary oppositional status as, say, the subcontinent had for Britain. It follows that Japanese films about Japan's colonies do not have the us/them structure that underlies their European counterparts. There was a "we" included in the rhetoric of Japanese imperialism. Manchuria was a target for immigration by Japanese, rigorously promoted in many documentaries. More important, the pan-Asianism of Japan's co-prosperity sphere, as manifested in film criticism and filmmaking, posited a racial difference between the West and Asia. Thus, whereas American war films worked hard to distinguish between Chinese and Japanese, deferring the yellow peril racism previously associated with Chinese onto Japanese through complex, if convoluted, analysis,[81] Japanese films constructed an Asian "us" in opposition to a hateful, imperialist (white) "them." The fact that many of Japan's enemies were fellow Asians made representations of the Asian friend = enemy unusually problematic for Japanese filmmakers.

Ueno Toshiya has recently constructed a useful topology of this complicated situation from the animated film *Momotarō: Divine Troops of the Ocean* (Momotarō—Umi no shinpei; 1945). Ueno's work is particularly interesting for the way it avoids the limits of the binary schema of friend/enemy. This film shows the legendary Momotarō in a Southeast Asian jungle, where he and his animal friends prepare for war and finally rout the enemy. The only human character in the film is Momotarō; his troops and the natives are all animals, and the enemies are demons wearing British uniforms. Ueno notes a curious politics of the other in these characterizations:

> If we take Momotarō to be representing the Japanese, the fighting animals would be the natives living on the territories subjugated by Japanese imperialism. . . . However, this same structure, composed by the human "subject" and the sub-human "other," also applies to the situation within Japan, the inside

> of the Japanese communal body. To the Japanese people, who are the "children," the emperor represents a transcendental "other," albeit different from the "other" constituted by the enemy.[82]

Ueno extracts the following patterns from the film:

Momotarō / Animals / Demons
Japanese / People under Japanese / Enemy People
Emperor / Common Japanese / Enemy People

These relationships all contain a common structure:

Transcendental Existence / Self and Community / Aliens

This structure adds an order of complexity to the image of the other in the hardening style of the war cinema. The identity of the Japanese people relies on a subordinate relationship to the emperor as much as on the difference between the Japanese and other races. In fact, whereas most Japanese war films rely on this triad as an implicit structure, *Japan in Time of Crisis* makes it explicit, as Araki describes what could be called the metaphysics underlying public discourse. He explains what he considers to be the defense of the nation using an animated intertitle, which is depicted here in Figure 8:

> A country or nation has its own way. The way of our country is the way of Japan, the way of the Emperor, the Imperial way. Consequently, as this is the nation and the way which has everlasting life, it is in its nature to continue to expand permanently and eternally in time and to progress and develop

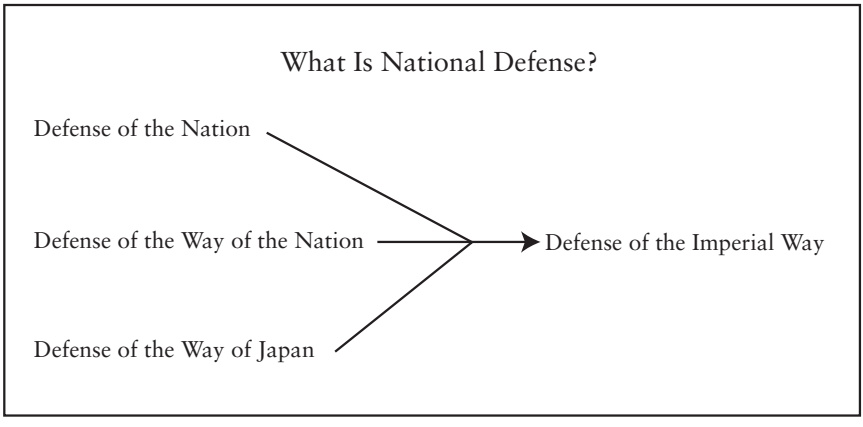


Figure 8. Animated chart illustrating the mission of the nation, from *Japan in Time of Crisis*.

> endlessly in space. I would not adopt such a narrow viewpoint that interprets the defense of the nation, that is, the defense of the way of the country, in terms of geographic position and environment.[83]

Araki continues, using a second animated chart, the elements of which appear here in Figure 9:

> As our country is destined to develop in space, that is, as it has the spirit of continual prosperity with the eternity of a nation bounded only by Heaven and earth, our national defense cannot be considered only in terms of geography or in a narrow sense of opposition to other countries. We cannot think separately of the Imperial Household, nation, or subject, because Japan is the country whose national structure consists in the combination of all three.

No other film in the Japanese war cinema gives as straightforward an explanation of its own underlying ideology (in spite of its tortured logic). Benedict Anderson has argued that the nation-state's emergence was predicated on a shift from a prophetic notion of simultaneity along time to homogeneous, empty time—from prefigured fulfillment to temporal coincidence measured by the steady progression of clocks, calendars, and newspapers.[84] The newsreels that *Japan in Time of Crisis* appropriated may have functioned in a similar manner, but the time of the nation undergirding Japan retained a vertical, simultaneous quality, even if it never attained a hegemonic position. Thus, from the time of the establishment of the nation in the Meiji era, Japan used a calendar with a "national era" system that began counting years from the legendary date of the founding of Japan in 660 B.C., as well as a system called *nengō*. These were shorter cycles that traditionally changed with auspicious events, but after the Meiji Restoration they were completely identified nominally and temporally with the

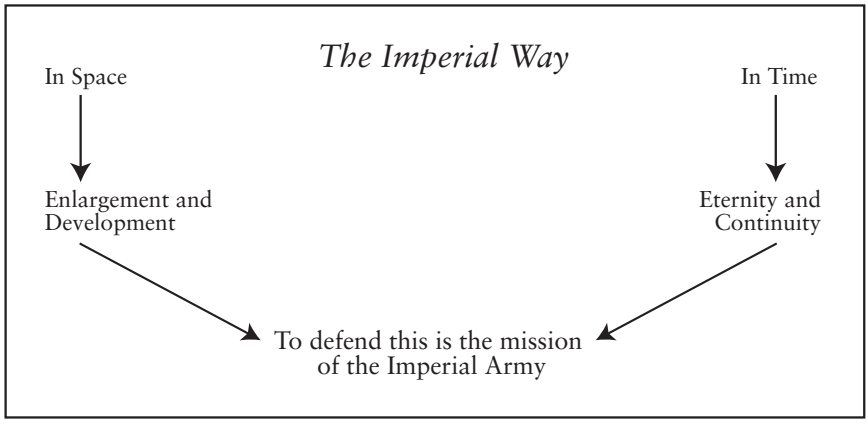


Figure 9. The time and space of the nation according to *Japan in Time of Crisis*.

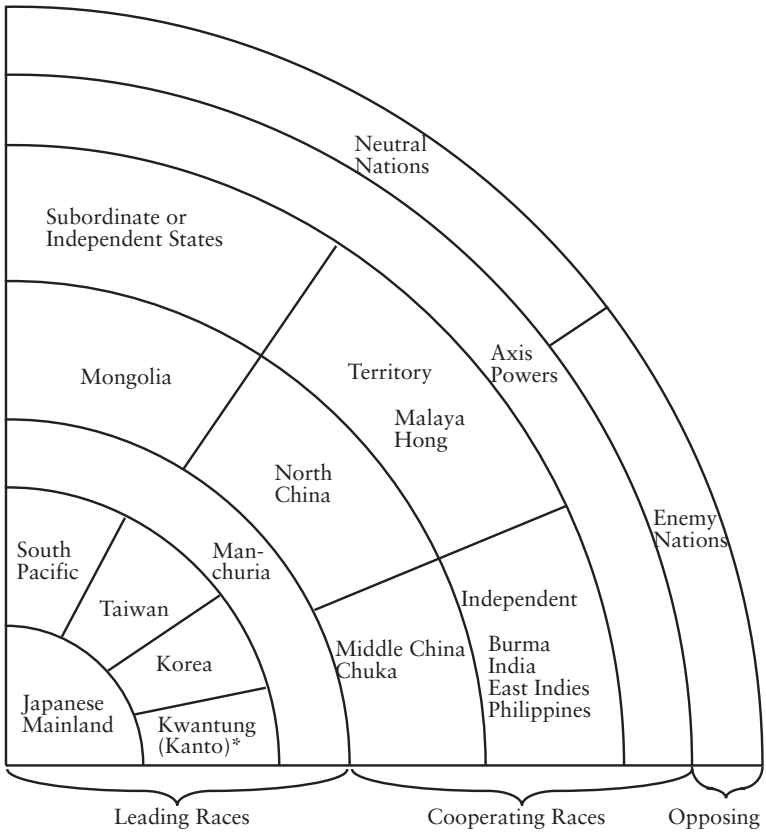
reigning emperor; the Gregorian calendar was known and used, but not officially sanctioned. Araki illustrates a time and space of imaginary plenitude, boundless and eternal, represented graphically as a zero point identical with the nation and emperor.

Other films collapse the transcendental existence Araki describes into reifications of tradition and increasingly vague representations of Hirohito. Before the China Incident, the emperor occassionally appeared in films, shot with care from a respectful distance. Gradually, the princely, commodified Hirohito of early news films was "phased out" and replaced by more appropriately obscure stand-ins: flags, the imperial seal, shrines and their *torii* (gateways), Mount Fuji, smaller shrines in homes and offices and on ships, and especially views of the Imperial Palace. Although the emperor's photographic image would rarely appear, people in the films would constantly point to him through ritual bows, banzai cheers, and trips to pray across the moat from the palace. This substitution involved nothing so literal as "portraying him as a god." Araki once again points the way in his narration for images of Mount Fuji, which cue the proper response to these scenes: "Now, Japan, like Mount Fuji towering abruptly in the sky above the morning mist, is making a display of her magnificent being before the whole world. It is precisely the true figure of the Japanese Empire. I feel that fresh pride, emotion, courage and pleasure rise up within me when, inspired by that figure, the singular racial spirit is revived in myself and I make up my mind to exalt the virtue of the divine country." This is the seductive transcendental existence soliciting identification through the haunting nonpresence of the emperor.

Of course, there is a geopolitical level to this topology of otherness, starting with the nucleus of the emperor and extending across Asia to enemy territory. Here we must remember the principle of hierarchy built into Japanese public discourse. Anderson has conceived of the nation as a "deep, horizontal comradeship," but Araki tilts this image on its side, measuring membership in the nation by what Maruyama Masao once called "proximity to the emperor."[85] The closer one was to the emperor, the more power one enjoyed. This organization was literalized in the film distribution system, as can be seen in the diagram included in a 1942 article by Film Distribution Company's Asao Tadao (Figure 10).[86] In the article, Asao discusses the changes he feels are necessary in the narrative and style of films as they are targeted toward different areas along the radiating sphere of the nation. Asao's chart schematically represents the hierarchy built around proximity to the emperor, who sits at the zero point of the *x* and *y* axes and guarantees the figure's meaning. What is interesting about Asao's chart is that it does not rely on other rhetorical devices in circulation to

represent this geopolitical hierarchy, such as the Nichi/Shi/Man model championed by the New Order. It provides an even stronger, graphic sense of the array of power coursing through the social world, with the differences between public and hidden discourses increasing as one moves along its radius.

Ueno's version of this structure enables a clearer perspective on the spatial axis and helps locate a given "self" in the scheme of things. We can start with the problem of *Japan in Time of Crisis*'s site of enunciation, or what Bill Nichols has called the documentary voice.[87] Actually, at the Tokyo Trial Araki's defense counsel attempted to make this an issue.[88] Despite facing a frustrated and hostile bench, the lawyer managed to reveal how confusing the issue of documentary voice is; in such a collaborative art, how could one say *Japan in Time of Crisis* is the work of Araki alone just because he speaks on-screen, in direct address? Closer to the core is the question, Who exactly is *speaking* here? From *where* does this film speak?



* Leased territory at southern tip of Liaotung Peninsula, including Port Arthur and Talien.

Figure 10. Asao Tadao's chart of the wartime film distribution system.

The opening credits seem to locate authorship. In many war documentaries, the first image is an intertitle proclaiming the recommendation of the film by one branch of the government or another. In *Japan in Time of Crisis,* this takes the form of the blessing of the Army Ministry: "As we consider that the above-mentioned moving picture contains many instructive matters for the national education in this critical period, herewith, we dare to recommend it to the public, on June 1st in the 8th year of Shōwa. Army Ministry to Osaka Mainichi Newspaper Company." The title of the film follows this message, and then another intertitle message takes credit for authorship: "We, the undersigned, do offer these whole reels to our 90 million fellow countrymen and 30 million people in Manchukuo, who are directly facing this critical situation. Osaka Mainichi Newspaper Publishing Company; Tokyo Nichinichi Newspaper Publishing Company; Kido Motosuke, Chair of Directors Committee." Many documentary producers "aimed" their films with such introductory title cards from the Army Ministry or Education Ministry or even individual officials. However, in *Japan in Time of Crisis* it is the recurring image of Araki, standing before that large Japanese flag, that provides the route to the real site of enunciation. Araki may be reading narration provided by a newspaper company, but he is positioning himself as a stand-in for the national polity, the Japanese people's transcendental existence in Ueno's topology.

From this wellspring of meaning, *Japan in Time of Crisis* projects itself out into the world across the spatial array of the ever-expanding nation, which is literally mapped out in this and other war documentaries through animated maps of the territory under discussion. Depending on the date of production, films use maps with different shadings and patterns to suggest the state of the spectrum. Because *Japan in Time in Crisis* was shot in the period between the Manchurian and China Incidents, its maps show the home islands, Formosa, and the Korean peninsula in black. Manchuria is striped, and the rest of Asia is white. In films produced after 1937, the stripes spread across the continent and the Pacific, with the striping appearing in different styles to indicate further territorial breakdowns. These maps illustrate the problematic nature of the representations of the Asian friend = enemy in the style of the public imaginary. They may also have made analytic dissections of the Euro-American enemy unnecessary; the most important differences with this enemy were racial and cultural, and thus obvious (which might explain the relative paucity of representations of Italy and Germany). On the other hand, the peculiar representations of the Asian friend = enemy reveal the filmmakers' paradoxical need for incorporation tropes that could at the same time express hierarchical difference.

In contrast, the image of the (Japanese) self in these films was straightforward. In fact, Benedict's lists of adjectives provide a convenient summary: courageous, steady, kind, patient, strong, sensible, disciplined, and patriotic. These qualities are condensed in what was probably the most popular, powerful image of the war. It originally appeared in *Malayan War Front: A Record of the March Onward,* a film that proved far more successful than its producer expected, grossing more than twice the figure predicted. Certainly some of this success may be attributed to the climactic scene, in which Percival meets with Yamashita Tomoyuki to negotiate the surrender of Singapore (Figure 11).[89] Flush with Japan's spectacular victory, Yamashita demands unconditional surrender. The two commanders sit across a table from each other, with advisers on either side. The cameraman later recounted the experience of filming this scene:

> On this day in particular, we cameramen were the only people allowed inside the meeting room, and we shot this historical scene. This is a little beside the point, however, the conversation tempo in the real meeting was extremely slow. Spontaneously, I thought of dropping the running speed of the camera. Actually, I think it was successful in clearly bringing out the personalities and positions of Percival and General Yamashita.[90]

The cameraman's spontaneous decision converted a nondescript conversation into a rousing confrontation, a microcosm for the Pacific War itself. With the camera running slower, the two men's body movements were accelerated, and the two adversaries were transformed into caricatures. In the scene, Yamashita rattles his sword, slices the air with hand gestures, and pounds the table with uncommon force; Percival's glances and gestures of negotiation and reconciliation look puppetlike and obsequious. Through a simple photographic trick, these men came to embody the naturalized conventions of the hardened public discourse. This was powerful stuff.



Figure 11. Yamashita and Percival meet in *Malayan War Front: A Record of the March Onward*.

The scene has been clipped and reused in many subsequent documentaries (including those made today). It was even adapted to animation in *Momotarō: Divine Troops of the Ocean,* with Yamashita as Momotarō and Percival as a sniveling, horned demon.

Yamashita represented a resolute, disciplined self, completely free of Western influence. In such Pacific War–era filmmaking, this quality was a matter of course. *Japan in Time of Crisis,* however, expends much energy in obsessively condemning all things Western. Over images of store windows filled with white-faced dolls, coffee beans, jewelry, hats, and clothing, Araki is heard raging:

> The sudden rise of Japan's international position and the growth of national power have made the Japanese people assume an air of vulgar prosperity both spiritually and in a material sense, completely forgetting their previous exertions and the original ground upon which the Empire stands. This resulted in an uncritical infatuation with all things European, and Western culture both good and bad was accepted unconditionally. Thus, the independent ideal characteristic of the Japanese race was swept away in less than no time. It is quite natural that this national stagnation reflected itself in all her foreign policies.

This sequence is followed by a rather curious fictional scene set in one of Ginza's cafés, *the* site of cultural decadence. This was a period in Japan when the coffee shop became the location of modernity and consumer culture, and the numbers of such shops exploded. The coffee shop in *Japan in Time of Crisis* is a scene of bohemian terror (Figure 12). Women smoke cigarettes, drape themselves over men, and throw their empty wine glasses against the wall. People play with insipid toys such as yo-yos. Men and women dance to the jazz tunes of a mandolin player who wears a smart beret and smokes a pipe. Having danced hard, two couples leave the café to stroll around Ginza. As they walk under the blinking neon lights, a man in Meiji-era dress calls the two men a couple of hairy Europeans, and the men end up in a confrontation. The Meiji-era man reprimands all the nighttime revelers for daring to indulge themselves during a time of crisis.

Women receive special attention in these scenes, where they are posed as spoiled purity. They walk down public streets in snappy Western dresses; their hair is bobbed, and they wear makeup. They talk back to men. Thus personal behavior and international policy become conflated. However, Araki is not pessimistic about Japan's future. Despite the evils of Western skirts, makeup, golf, and Communism, he looks forward to a future when Japanese will achieve a racial self-consciousness in which "the great spirit of the founding of the empire revives in the heart of every Japanese, and when the Japanese, realizing this clearly, display the prestige of our

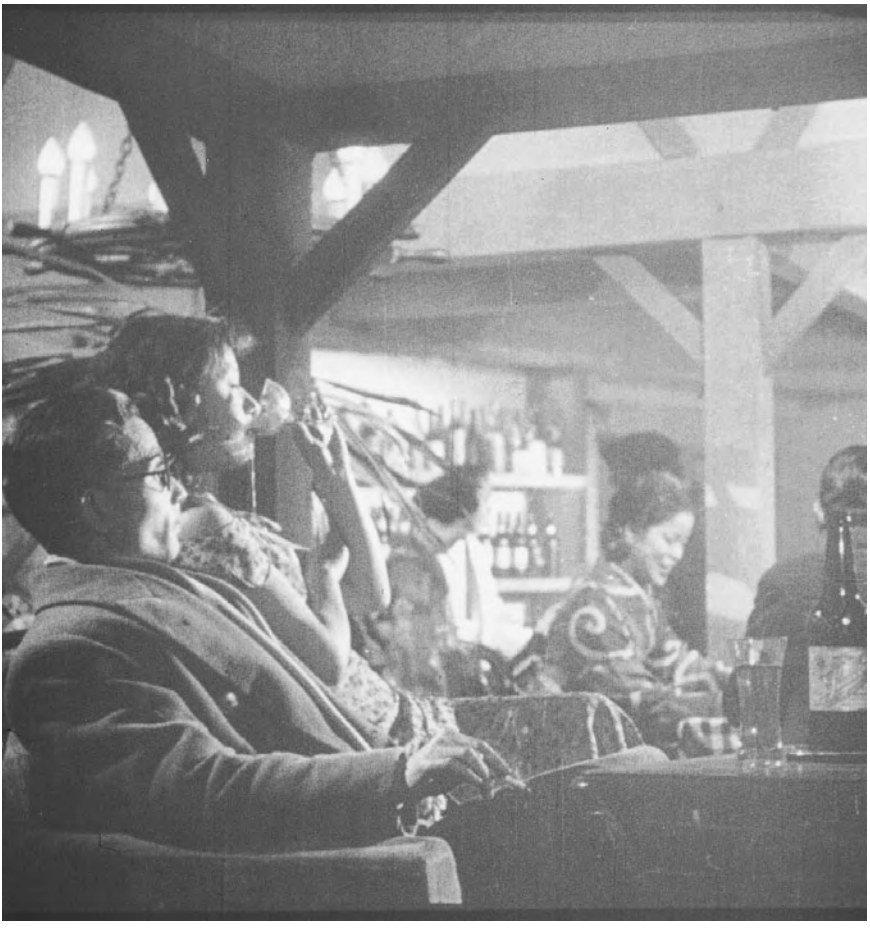


Figure 12. The iconic site of cultural decadence in *Japan in Time of Crisis*: the café, where couples drink, dance, flirt, and play with yo-yos.

country." This requires discipline, which explains why this line is spoken over images of hundreds of children exercising en masse.

The coordinated-exercise scene appears to have been obligatory in Japanese documentaries throughout the 1930s and until the end of the Pacific War; one begins to wait for its appearance when watching these films, and one is rarely let down. Whenever a group assembles, calisthenics are inevitable. Sometimes the group is on the smallest of scales, such as at a factory or a school; *Speaking of Youthful Japan* even shows nurses pumping the legs of plump little infants. During the Pacific War, filmmakers competed to produce the largest mass-exercise scenes imaginable. Those in *Foundation of Victory* and *Young Soldiers of the Sky* involved literally thousands of participants, all moving gracefully in sync. These arrange-

ments of anonymous bodies in synchronized motion visually express the grip of the nation on its people. In this sense, they have much in common with the military parade and ultimately constitute another representation of that transcendental existence that bound Japanese in the hardened public discourse.

Once again, Araki's narration helps explain how audiences should read these images. After an extended montage showing troops in training, he quotes two proverbs that cue spectators toward the proper response: "When heaven entrusts a person with an important duty, he always inflicts pain and hardship on him in order to determine whether he is capable of carrying out his mission." He follows this with a terser version: "Adversity makes a man wise." This reading comes to displace any alternative readings of images of groups of human bodies in synchronized motion. However, at one level it is also an expression of the philosophy espoused by Araki's own Imperial Way faction, which emphasized Japan's ability to rise above its material disadvantages through the power of the human spirit. At the time, this was how Araki positioned himself in opposition to Nagata Tetsuzan's focus on building an infrastructure for the production of great material strength (in other words, machines). This is rather ironic given that by the late 1930s, the depersonalized images of synchronized bodies in motion, combined with this ethic of discipline, went hand in hand with a comparison of humans and machines. In 1942, critic Imamura Taihei wrote:

> In old times, people attributed human characteristics to animals and plants, and thus created fables and allegories; nowadays, we attribute human characteristics to the machine, and will perhaps create allegories on the machine. This kind of allegorization is already present in Walt Disney's *Donald Duck and the Robot,* but it appears that the documentary will potentially take this one step further.[91]

Imamura's ideal *bunka eiga* possesses "a fresh, original perception of the life of the machine, a poetic originality with regard to the machine, a new yearning for the machine."[92] Many of the documentaries and fiction films made during the Pacific War achieve this quality. However, they also bring the human closer to the machine. For instance, it is difficult to judge whether the women in *We Are Working So So Hard* are mastering their sewing machines or vice versa; their dancelike movements appear regulated and nonhuman. *Attack to Sink* concentrates on the relationship of the sailors to their pipes and valves and torpedoes; the scenes developing that relationship rarely show the faces of the men, only their sweating bodies and pumping muscles. While this film displays the rigorous, spirited discipline

championed by Araki, it also appeals to its audience to strive to understand technology, as only through technology can Japan win the war. This is a spirit quite at odds with Araki, suggesting an ambiguous conflation of discourses that were originally opposed.

In sum, these were the main features of the documentary as the pressures on discursive formations in cinema hardened and refined the possibilities of representation into fast convention. The strictures listed by Hino could be expressed in a more positive manner and explicated into a set of general rules within which (and occasionally against which) creativity worked:

Films will go into great detail concerning the strategy and tactics of battles without moving close to the fighting.
Violence will not be shown directly, unless individualized and beautified; death must be aesthetically pleasing, an object of desire.
Friendships between soldiers will be based on love and the trials of the battlefield.
Hierarchy under the emperor is rigid, and the chain of command will be made spectacle.
The Western enemy is always weak and cruel; other Asians tread a vague line between grateful friend and potential foe.
Vestiges of Western influence will be expunged.
All things Japanese—religion, emperor system, weaponry, aesthetics, geography, design, art, and so on—will be canonized and "monumentalized."

Darrell William Davis has identified many of these traits in what he compellingly calls "monumental style."[93] Although he uses the term to refer specifically to a relatively small group of *jidai geki* national policy films produced after enactment of the Film Law, his extensive close textual analyses reveal that monumental style was a localized refinement of what I have been discussing—a readily identifiable film style that can be found in nascent form as early as 1933. In the coming chapters, I explore and elaborate this set of conventions in greater detail, as well as demonstrate how some filmmakers used these conventions to camouflage their discontent. In any case, by the time of the Pacific War many of the features of monumental style were shared by all kinds of films, from period fiction to documentaries. Indeed, I argue that the monumental style of fiction film finds its roots in the protean flux of the *henshū eiga*.

[4] *Stylish Charms: When Hard Style Becomes Hard Reality*

I have argued that in the situation of intensifying domination, Japanese film style became highly conventionalized, and that its varying displays of a unified polity hide the fractiousness of reality and the less-than-total grip of the dominant. At the same time, we must recognize that this difference is most easily recognized in social arenas, where the gulf between the powerful and the powerless is far more extreme. Japan offers a relatively ambiguous situation and thus poses a challenge to the historian. Indeed, although it is rather easy to describe the hard film style of the public discourse, this does not help explain why it formed in the way it did. The vast number of spectators for these films were, strictly speaking, subordinated in a system that appears totalitarian at first glance. Thus one might assume that these people had a distanced or ironic relationship with the conventions that represented their own submission to power; it would seem they produced, replicated, and consumed these films simply to avoid the dangerous implications of opposing the dominant codes. Filmmakers who were cognizant and critical of the obvious difference between the documentary sign and the referential, lived reality of wartime Japan knew the fate of Prokino; they understood that they had to conform to the hard style or find another career.

However, we must assume there were reasons that film style consolidated in these very codes that simple state pressure cannot explain. The relationship people had to cinema was far more complicated than feigned enthusiasm for the sake of survival. In wartime Japan, power was distributed over a subtle spectrum of elite positions built into the tissue of the public discursive field, and the differences between the dominating and the dominated were exceedingly complex. For example, relations of power change radically across the rings of Asao's diagram for the distribution system (see Figure 10 in chapter 3). Certainly, the people in lands occupied by Japan were well aware of the performance of submission required of them, and

the differences between public and private worlds were undoubtedly extreme. But what of the inner rings, especially that of Japan itself? We should expect two very different brands of spectatorship for a given film, depending on whether the site of reception was Manila's Palace Theater or Shinjuku's Nyūsu Gekijō.

Like most war cinema, fiction films and documentaries alike posed their representations of the world at war as adequate, exploiting the indexical qualities of the photochemical moving image. It is simple enough for us to assert that representation does not equal reality. However, the attempt to collapse the sign and referent during the China and Pacific Wars was predicated on several interlocking binaries, the blurring of whose boundaries held certain kinds of charms that veiled and naturalized the circulation of power. I begin this chapter with the key binary, the smudging of the difference between fiction and documentary cinemas, before turning to the reception context and the way representations of gender and violence encourage spectators to collapse the distinction between the filmed and lived worlds.

When Fiction Becomes Documentary: The Theories of Imamura Taihei

There is a curious scene near the middle of *Japan in Time of Crisis*. Some children gather on the famous street corner at Ginza 4-*chōme* to sell newspapers so that they can earn money to donate to the soldiers in Manchuria. At the same time, their mother dances the night away at a swanky nightclub down the street. When a little boy complains about the cold, a girl reprimands him, "Think of the soldiers in Manchuria!" She looks meaningfully off into space, and the sound of gunfire swells in the background. The screen fills with newsreel imagery of fighting on the continent, literalizing her thoughts; the imagination of this girl is purely documentary. (Then the slothful mother's taxi suddenly appears and runs her down in the street.) Aside from its almost comical attack on women drinking, what is interesting about this scene is the way it makes little distinction between fictional and nonfictional modes. It switches freely between the two, although with decidedly amateurish results.

The wartime era's specious claims that documentary can adequately represent the world went hand in hand with a conflation of documentary and fictional modes of filmmaking. If we look at the way more elaborate forms of documentary developed during the course of the 1930s, we can see how filmmakers became increasingly skillful at seamlessly smudging the differences between candid photography and reenactment. As a spin-

off of this tendency, the issue of fiction in documentary and documentary in fiction would become the stuff of practical and theoretical discussion later in the decade. In the period immediately following the China Incident, the phrase *jissha seishin* (actuality spirit) echoed through the studios and film publishing houses. It referred to the stunning rise of the *bunka eiga* and the new documentary quality of the theatrical film. I am interested in the various cinemas that constitute *the* national cinema, and in any national cinema there are multiple centers and peripheries with flux and slippage among them. In the largest scheme of things, documentary has always been conceptualized as peripheral to the feature fiction film's center. However, by the end of the 1930s it would be more appropriate to conceptualize fiction and nonfiction as two overlapping spheres with constant flux between them. With respect to the conventions of representation, the feature film/documentary hierarchy appears inverted in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Indeed, it is tempting to place the feature fiction film in the peripheral position.

The reasons behind this blurring of difference and sharing of conventions are complex. For one thing, the undeniable pressure of history at wartime pushed itself into the fictional diegeses of the war cinema, and there was an accompanying need for and desire to display Japan's colonial trophies through the documentary capabilities of the medium. Criticism, feature film production, audience popularity, and government support and/or interference mutually reinforced the influence of documentary in the film world of the mid- to late 1930s. Also, documentaries simply preceded feature films when it came to war subjects. Filmmakers produced many fiction films about the events in China in the early 1930s, but they did not dominate the field as they came to do in documentary. When big-budget feature filmmakers such as Tasaka Tomotaka, Abe Yutaka, and Yamamoto Kajirō finally came around to the war genre in a serious way, they drew on a ready set of conventions already well established within documentary filmmaking practices.

Furthermore, the ability of documentary to adopt a strongly rhetorical form lent itself to the business of coding visual and aural style against an explicit politics. In chapter 3 I noted how *Japan in Time of Crisis* baldly connects visual conventions with reading cues in the sound track. Put simply, documentary can be more direct than fiction. That the documentary preceded the fiction film in establishing the style of the wartime cinema is strongly supported by film criticism. For instance, when Iwasaki Akira describes what he defines as a militaristic style on the eve of the China Incident in 1937, his examples are drawn exclusively from well-known documentaries. Had he been writing two years later, he would have

referred to at least some of the many popular fiction films made during the China War.[1]

Another factor behind the inclusion of documentary styles in fiction films was the production of documentaries by feature filmmakers. By the late 1930s, there were structural linkages throughout the industry. We have already seen how studios produced both fiction and nonfiction films. Shochiku Ōfuna even required potential fiction film directors to shoot a *bunka eiga* as a kind of exam. After passing this test, they would be allowed to move to narrative filmmaking. Directors such as Mizoguchi, Ozu, and Uchida Tomu made a few *bunka eiga,* none of which they were particularly proud of. When asked in a *zadankai* in 1941 if he made education films at Makino Kyōiku Eiga, which was one of the first formal efforts at producing for the education market, Uchida Tomu just smiled.[2] Another participant in this *zadankai* was director Tasaka Tomotaka, director of some of the most impressive war films of the period. One of the aspects contributing to the effectiveness and popularity of his films was their undeniably documentary quality. Tasaka commented:

> In today's so-called *bunka eiga* there are various methods and modes of expression from the fiction film. Also, in today's fiction film, various elements of the *bunka eiga*—for example, the spirit of documentation, the spirit of actuality included in the fiction film—constitute the coming path for the development of fiction film. Therefore, I feel *bunka eiga* and fiction film will continue to approach each other.[3]

Tasaka was the director of a film typical of this trend, the adaptation of Hino Ashihei's *Mud and Soldiers*. He shot it on the battlefields in China and mixed his professional actors with real soldiers. The story describes life on the road for a squadron of troops during the Hangchow attack in China. The battlefield conditions are, of course, very difficult, and enduring those conditions naturally requires the patient discipline and perseverance idealized by the military culture. Along the journey, the soldiers' less lethal enemies include lice, cold rain, mud, blisters, and boredom. A parallel plotline that follows the growth of the soldiers' friendship has a strong homosocial quality; as the troops trade jokes and stories about home, they become closer. Their group also becomes smaller as casualties take their toll. When the Americans captured a print of this film, they gained a documentary-like catalog of the military tactics used by Japanese foot soldiers on the continent. U.S. Army Signal Corps editors excised the melodrama and transformed *Mud and Soldiers* into a training film for American troops. That version of the film, still titled *Mud and Soldiers,* is preserved at the U.S. National Archives along with training films made by such producers and directors as John Ford and Frank Capra.

Mud and Soldiers was hardly the only feature film that displayed the "documentary spirit." Tasaka's other films, especially *Five Scouts* and *Airplane Drone* (Bakuon; 1939), did so too, as did Shimizu Hiroshi's *Children in the Wind* (Kaze no naka no kodomotachi; 1937) and *Four Seasons of Children* (Kodomo no shiki; 1939), Kumatani Hisatora and Sawamura Tsutomu's *Shanghai Navy Brigades* (Shanghai rikusentai; 1939) and *A Story of Leadership* (Shidō monogatari; 1941), Abe Yutaka's *Flaming Sky* (Moyuru ōzora; 1941), Kurosawa Akira's *The Most Beautiful* (Ichiban utsukushiku; 1944), and Yamamoto Kajirō's *Horse* (Uma; 1941) and *The War at Sea from Hawaii to Malaya* (Hawai, Marē okikaisen; 1942). The single most impressive blurring of the boundary between fiction and documentary in the narrative war film occurs in Geraldo de Leon and Abe Yutaka's *Dawn of Freedom* (Ano hata o ute; 1942). Shot in the occupied Philippines, this film tells the story of the defeat of the American forces and the islands' "dawn of freedom" under Japanese rule. Several extraordinary sequences show hundreds of American prisoners of war reenacting their own defeat and surrender at Bataan and Corregidor.[4] Japanese critics picked up on this documentary trend in fiction films. Many commented on it, even making it a theme of their criticism. After the continual release of new documentaries that took innovative approaches to representing reality—films such as *On the Beach at Ebb Tide, Record of a Nursery, Kobayashi Issa,* and *Snow Country*—writers began speaking of a new kind of art, an art distinct from what they previously associated with the fiction film.

Of all the critics writing at the time, the most representative and certainly the most influential was Imamura Taihei.[5] As a champion of the documentary form, Imamura became one of the most powerful and interesting writers about film in the late 1930s and 1940s. What set him apart from most writers was his interest in larger theoretical questions about cinema and culture rather than simple critical evaluation.

In addition to being one of documentary's loudest cheerleaders, Imamura is often hailed as one of the most "consistent" and original theorists to address Japanese film.[6] His friend, Sugiyama Heiichi, begins a biography of Imamura by calling him "our nation's single, extraordinary film critic who constructed film criticism and critique with a single theory, this in an age when the obligatory criticism of the left wing weakened and was overrun by impressionistic film criticism."[7] Placing Imamura's writing squarely between left-wing and popular criticism, Sugiyama leaves him in a uniquely exterior position in relation to the critic's own era. However, although Imamura's fans emphasize his originality, one can also point to many ways in which he was a product of his times. There is an ambiguity

at the heart of Imamura's work that sums up the indeterminacy of the documentary world of the China and Pacific Wars.

In his youth, Imamura dropped out of junior high school and moved to Tokyo. While working, he became interested in left-wing thought and began participating in political movements. He was arrested—for receiving and paying for a radical newspaper—and subsequently released on probation, which meant that he was under regular surveillance from then on. As the story goes, he could not work while on probation and awaiting trial. Because of this, he became so poor he could only afford the cheaper ticket prices of theaters showing documentaries and news films, a factor in the direction he would take as an intellectual. He soon decided to pursue his dreams and write film criticism. Initially, he sent manuscripts to *Kinema Junpō,* which functioned as a sort of gateway into the film world for many would-be critics. The magazine published some of his articles, and this propelled him into the field.

Imamura was always less interested in impressionistic criticism than in theoretical issues, so magazines like *Kinema Junpō* cramped his style. He decided that the only way he could truly press in this direction was through the independent medium of the *dōjinshi.* He and his friends discussed the possibility of starting their own magazine and soon found the cooperation of other like-minded critics. In 1935, they began publishing *Eiga Shūdan* (Film group), with Imamura serving as editor. Much of the energy behind the magazine came from the students Imamura gathered around him. He connected the magazine to film clubs at the universities, gave lectures, and led student reading groups. When the government started prohibiting film study groups in Japanese universities—they were considered subversive in orientation—the police ordered Imamura's group to cease publication of *Eiga Shūdan.* They did, but simultaneously started a new journal called *Eiga Kai* (Film world), which continued until 1940, when the Film Law required all film magazines to merge.

Throughout this period, Imamura was an incredibly prolific writer. Aside from his articles for *Eiga Shūdan* and *Eiga Kai,* he published in a wide variety of newspapers, magazines, and anthologies. Starting with *Eiga Geijutsu no Keishiki* (The style of film art) in 1938, which came out just months before the last issue of *Eiga Kai,* Imamura published ten monographs by the end of World War II. Many people have pointed out that his writing reveals a commitment to theoretical issues about cinema and avoids directly dealing with the war to a remarkable degree (this is the "single theory" from which Imamura never swayed). His Communist roots went underground to the extent necessary, considering the times. Therefore, one must often read between the lines of his criticism to discern his

real positions. For example, in "Sensō Kiroku Eiga ni Nozomu Mono" (My aspirations for the war documentary), a 1942 article for *Bunka Eiga,* Imamura takes the war film to task: "In this way, the creator of the documentary film breaks war down into its structural elements, and unless he can see through to the deep meaning of war we must say that it will be difficult for the war documentary to become art."[8] Imamura, who we assume was opposed to the war, appears to be inviting us to look deeply into the documentaries of the day and to search for the war's reality. He also seems to suggest that these less-than-artful films will resist such critical penetration. Although such critical passages are sprinkled throughout Imamura's writings, it must also be said that much of his work is very ambivalent. The main thrust of his theories contains an undeniable indeterminacy, analysis of which will enable our investigation into the slippage between fiction and documentary, and lead us ultimately to the reception context.

Imamura's theory reveals a productive engagement with nonfiction form and a sensitivity to stylistic transformations that appeared to bring fiction and documentary into increasingly close contact. Whereas most critics complimented a given film's documentary look, Imamura's popular criticism judged a war film successful to the extent that it *moved fictional cinema a step closer to documentary.*[9] Most critics grasped the relatively dominant position of documentary style; Imamura simply pushed this tendency to its logical extreme, arguing that all future art would be predicated on a documentary quality. This is a reversal of common sense several dimensions more expansive than Terada Torahiko's a decade earlier.

Imamura's thought also has obvious parallels with Balasz's revolution from the age of word to the age of image; indeed, it would be surprising if Imamura had not read *The Spirit of Film,* as it had been translated by Sasaki Norio in 1932.[10] For Balasz, in place of developing expression by means of humanity's abstract conceptions, print culture degenerated into a mode of communication devoid of humanity. Cinema, on the other hand, is capable of generating meaning through gesture and facial expression, and Balasz calls for filmmakers to return to that earlier age. For Imamura, words alone cannot express humanity's dynamic senses and society's modern industrialization and mechanization, but through the medium of cinema, such expression is possible. The differences between Imamura and Balasz certainly have something to do with the fact that they were writing in different eras divided by the coming of sound. At the same time, Balasz stresses images that signify meaning escaping the expressive abilities of language, celebrating the very human, emotional quality of the image. Imamura is more interested in the direct sense of movement at the heart of cinema—the imagistic expression of society's mechanisms. In chapter 3,

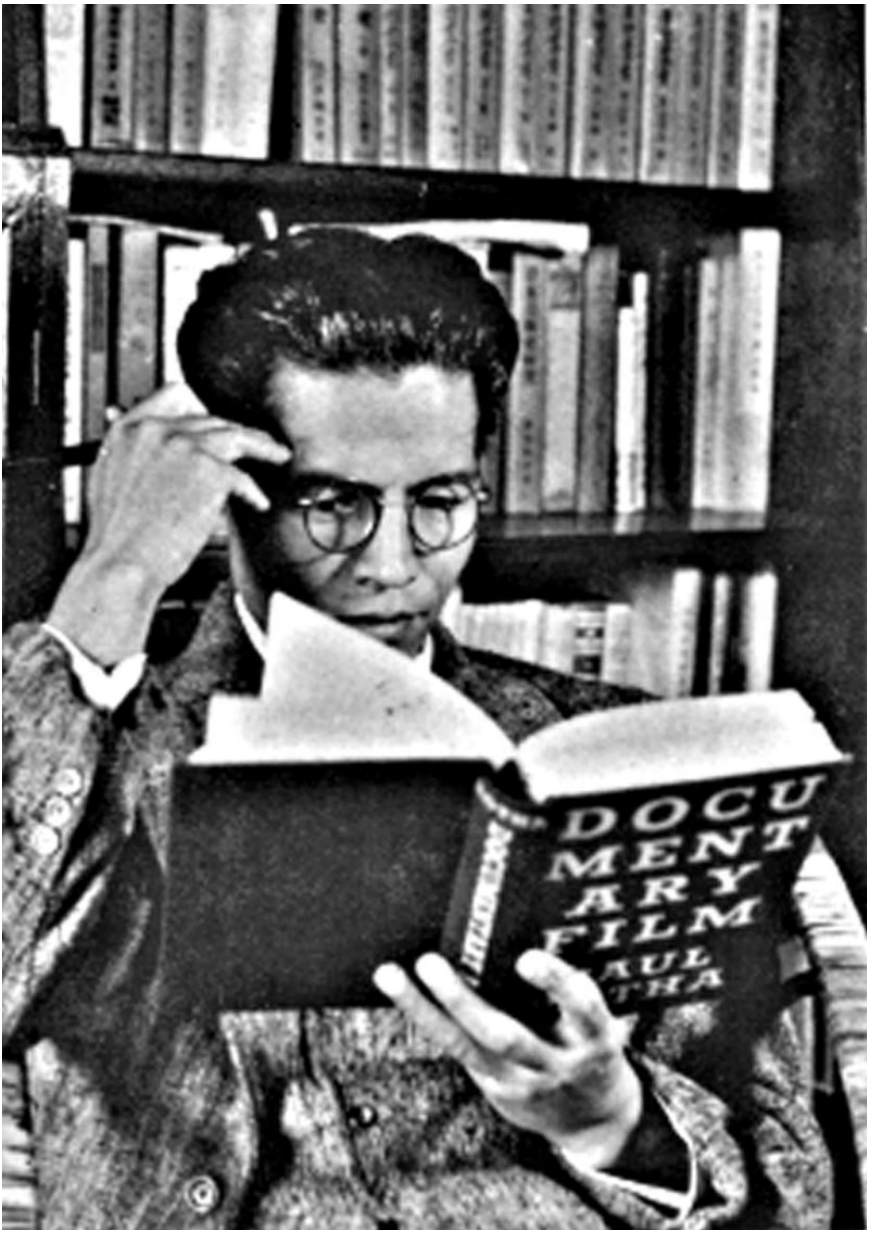


Figure 13. Imamura Taihei.

we glimpsed Imamura's fascination with modern machines. His turn from abstract knowledge to concrete movement of things—the mechanization and industrialization of modern society—was condensed in the twin phenomena of the animated and documentary cinemas. For this reason, his

two most significant books, *On Documentary* and *On Animation* (Manga eigaron), must be seen as deeply implicating each other. For Imamura, the difference between Disney and documentary is razor thin (although the political and theoretical positions he takes in these two books are seemingly incommensurable).

Imamura never goes so far as to say that cinema is strictly objective; he leaves too many hedges, such as, "This thing called a record is the subjective expression of intention through the selection of one part of the object." He recognizes that subjectivity courses through the cinema from the moment the cinematographer gazes through the viewfinder:

> By the stage of documentary cinema, the overall differentiation of documentary takes place. What appears as fiction film up to then is the documentary that differentiates various genres of art. For example, several people record the same object. In this case, the works they produce would sort out depending on the documentarist's talent and individuality. One person would probably record dramatically. Another would record in the manner of epic poetry, and yet another would record like lyric poetry. Furthermore, these are not temporary structures of some kind. They are records of actuality. *The differentiation of various artistic genres as records of reality is entirely possible.* That is not imagination; in the end, it is but reality.[11]

This is a typical example of the way Imamura collapses the fictional film and documentary while consistently leaning on the latter. But this comment also has much to do with Imamura's hopes for putting *kogata* cameras into the hands of everyone, a precursor of similar fantasies others have expressed concerning today's video camcorders. Despite these kinds of hedges, Imamura continually returns to the ability of the camera to collect records of social reality—this to the exclusion of editing, "which never reaches a position of dominance."[12] This is precisely the point at which Iwasaki Akira directed his critique of Imamura after the war, pointing to a quite different correspondence between the fiction film and the documentary: "Living actuality fast becomes artistic reality when it is selected, edited, and formed, and since this is when truth appears, documentary cinema is also no different from the fiction of theatrical film."[13] As we will see in the next chapter, Iwasaki was suspicious of all truth claims made on behalf of the documentary in the 1930s and 1940s.[14]

Imamura was less careful, and his writing often reveals an inclination to celebrate the indexical qualities of the photographic image. Nowhere is this stronger and more complex than in those moments when he turns to the issue of spectatorship and the collaborative nature of film production. He references these qualities with the term *shūdansei* (groupness).

This is the trope that enables Imamura to weave the fiction film into the documentary, the sign into the referent, and, by extension, the filmic world into its audience.

Imamura argues that cinema is significantly different from other arts, and he means more than its superficial qualities, such as its newness relative to the traditional arts. The difference is more essential: cinema recovers some of the key functions of primitive art, particularly its universality and its *shūdansei*. Cinema is universal in the sense that it combines so many of the other arts into one neat package. It takes what used to be completely particularized fields—writing, painting, storytelling, dance, magic, festival, ritual—and amalgamates them into a new field. (In some ways, Imamura's enthusiasm for this aspect of cinema resonates with the current fascination for "multimedia.") Cinema is characterized by *shūdansei* because it is created through the collaboration of many artists; furthermore, it is enjoyed by people in groups, in contrast to the solitary pleasure of a painting or a novel. For Imamura, the history of art is a story of dispersion—of form, of production, and of reception. It is a history of gradual alienation from art's roots in primitive cultures. Primitive art homogenized the act of creation and the act of reception because it was produced in a classless society (Imamura's political background starts coming into view here). In a modern, capitalist society, information workers and manual laborers are separated and alienated. The relationship between group and individual is at the heart of both prose and cinema. What sets them apart is that cinema describes not the world of an individual but the world of the group, the class, the race, or other categories of *shūdansei*. Individual thought is rendered as societal movement. For this reason, documentary comes closest to the essence of cinema, as it eschews singular actions in the world of individualized characters for generalized conditions manifest in direct representations of the real world. For Imamura, documentary represents the future of cinema, and thus the future of Art.

In his 1940 book *Kiroku Eigaron* (On documentary film), as in other places, Imamura poses the example of Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* as a model for the Japanese documentary. The *shūdansei* or groupness ideal that would seem to have roots in his socialism is manifested in this German documentary:

> Even when the entire movement [in movies] is just like reality, that element which creates form is an objectivity made of the collaboration of many subjectivities to the extent that even the subject cannot be seen. This kind of seeing from a variety of positions is not available in other arts. Through *Olympia's* combined observations of tens of cameras the supremacy of cinema's collaborative way of seeing appears in contrast to a solitary way of seeing.[15]

This illustrates Imamura's positioning of documentary at the apex of all arts for its resurrection of primitive modes of representation; at the same time, its rhetoric is identical to that of the public codes undergirding the hard style, which valorized the collective expunged of difference. In fact, this passage ends with an argument for the necessity of nationalizing the film industry, as only through the combined power of the people and the nation can documentary achieve the artistic dimension of the Riefenstahl film. Indeed, this rather discomforting conception of *shūdansei* has undeniable structural similarities to spiritist rhetoric—Japan as the future of Asia and thus the future of the world.

Imamura's comparison of documentary to primitive arts is equally indeterminate. In a 1938 speech given at the Fifth Film Education Lecture, an event sponsored by Sekino Yoshio's Tokyo City Education Department, Imamura addressed teachers from various elementary schools and basically gave them a gloss of his newly published *The Style of Film Art*. In the excerpt from the speech below, he refers to the epic poetry of both the indigenous Ainu and the West, an approach that would seem to resist cooptation into the wartime rhetoric of Japan's racial superiority. However, other aspects of the passage suggest a closer affiliation with the hardened conventions of public discourse:

> When we think about the origin of epic poetry, it was our own ancestors with their primitive collaborative society *[kyōdō shakai]* explaining the trials of constructing their own society. Epic poetry beautifies the great efforts of these ancestors. War always comes out in epic poetry. Out of war the cooperative system swells and enlarges, and ancient nations like Athens and Sparta are born. We can think of epic poetry as heroic stories narrating how our ancestors built these kinds of nations. This kind of origin of the epic poem is newslike, in the same manner as today's news films. . . . In other words, various people gather together and a great epic poem historically takes place there. As the epic poem is not created by a specific person, it closely resembles the collaborative production of cinema. Collaborative production in cinema occurs in the simultaneity of the present. Ancient epic poetry is collaboratively produced historically, temporally, period by period. This is their only difference.[16]

Here the news film's recording function assumes massive proportions, becoming the medium for telling present and future citizens about the nation's birth through violence. We must look to other adjacent contexts to understand what is going on in this rhetoric. In this case, Imamura's more peripheral publishing activities, which are usually overlooked in postwar considerations of his work, provide the most revealing context. *Eiga Shūdan* starts with little material on the war in China, but this begins to change

after the China Incident. Issue by issue, the war leaks into the pages of the magazine. With *Eiga Kai,* the conflict takes on a distinct presence. Earlier publications had ads for *Kinema Junpō* and the left-leaning *Eiga Hyōron,* but *Eiga Kai* advertises primarily Imamura's own books and the films of Dōmei Tsūshin. The latter were propaganda films produced through the supervision of the Cabinet Information Board. *Eiga Kai* often starts with ads for Dōmei's *Eiga Geppō* (Monthly film report). They loudly proclaim, "There are only two film magazines in the world—We're Japan's *March of Time*!" The ads promote Dōmei newsreels such as *The Spy Is You* (Supai wa kimi; 1938), *World-Class Police Force Accomplishing Protection of the Home Front* (Jūgo no mamori mattō shi sekai ni hokoru keisatsujin; 1938), and *Memoir of Blood and Sweat Carved in the Shadow of Victory* (Senshō no kage ni kizamu chi to ase no kōhōkiroku; 1938). *Eiga Kai* also publishes scripts for many issues of *Eiga Geppō.* Dōmei's longer documentaries, such as *New Continent* (Shintairiku; 1940), receive special attention. In Imamura's review of *Holy War* (Seisen), one of the later *henshū eiga* by Yokohama Cinema, he praises the documentary for its "pacification activity": "War films are mostly about armed conflict, but this one basically develops the pacification activity of the culture war."[17] As one might expect, the film has many scenes from the front of the so-called culture war—Japanese soldiers replacing anti-Japanese graffiti with clean propaganda posters, Chinese children in Japanese language lessons—but it also contains fierce street-fighting scenes that reveal the terms of pacification in China. Imamura eventually took charge of the film column for Dōmei's version of *Life* magazine, *Dōmei Gurafu* (Dōmei graph), and his students became staff members. This magazine zealously promoted the war, and here Imamura's writing feels far less ambivalent:

> What is especially different from before is the fact that Japan is in the process of constructing the East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere, and film naturally contributes to this; from now on, Japanese film will certainly use as a stage Manchuria, China, India, Thailand, and—of course as the war results continue—the Philippines, Malaya, and the various Indonesian islands. The vast entirety of Asia will become the stage for Japanese cinema, and that the various races of East Asia will take the stage is not a dream in the distant future. When this comes, the most excellent films will be national films *[kokumin eiga].* They will be national policy films and continental films, and at the same time they will be exportable films. . . . To the extent that the national ideal is lofty, it holds a leadership quality *[shidōsei]* for the other races of East Asia who are lower and slower. If this idea can express its "deep artistic meaning," even those other Asian races with their different customs and manners will be emotionally moved in agreement.[18]

In private situations, Imamura's speech was apparently little different. According to a handwritten transcript, during an in-studio study group at Toho in 1943 Imamura discussed the importance of "spontaneous discovery" for the documentary cameraman.[19] His remarks are similar in spirit to Torahiko's essay published some years before, but Imamura illustrates his point by drawing an analogy between the cameraman and a soldier in China. The Japanese soldier rides a horse along a long wall, not knowing that an enemy "bandit" *(hizoku)* rides toward him around the corner. When the soldier and bandit simultaneously reach the corner, the soldier responds presciently, striking the enemy off his horse; this is the kind of preparedness essential to the job of the documentary cameraman. The camera is this kind of weapon, Imamura insists, like a Japanese sword ready to be deployed at an instant.

After the war, the strong documentary quality of the wartime narrative cinema was forgotten in the enthusiasm for Italian neorealism and its supposed impact on the Japanese fiction film. Postwar critics celebrating this new brand of cinematic realism left the wartime tendency a structured absence in their criticism. In fact, Imamura himself provides one of the best examples of this repression in a detailed historiography of realism he published in the journal *Shisō* in 1975.[20] He bookends a discussion of realism with the silent Soviets and the Italian neorealists, placing the English documentary movement and Paul Rotha's *Documentary Film* between the two. The striking documentary quality of the Japanese war era, along with its complementary critical discourse, is structured out of the picture by Imamura—despite his own wartime enthusiasm for documentary art. Japanese critics celebrated the impact of the semidocumentary style of neorealism on postwar Japanese feature films precisely for Italian film's left-wing, antifascist humanism. This allowed them to ignore the possibility that its corollary in postwar Japanese cinema was a holdover from the war. As for Western criticism, it has yet to recognize the wartime influence of documentary on the fiction film. One of the few films that has merited discussion in this regard has been Kurosawa's home-front film *The Most Beautiful*. However, there are ideological undercurrents in this critical discourse as well; Kurosawa's documentary quality has been admired as a politics-resistant humanism, not as a convention of the hard-style war cinema both on the front lines and on the home front.

Reminiscing about his work during the war, Imamura once commented (in third-person voice), "He is already over sixty years of age. Having become this old, the man began looking back on his life. Those thoughts might resemble the following: 'When everyone puts their heads out the left

window, he puts his head out the right window. He then found something no one had seen before.'"[21] Considering Imamura's appeals to tradition and the relevance of the distant past, his celebration of the documentary spirit in the war film, his veneration of cinema's *shūdansei* and its *shidōsei,* it becomes very difficult indeed to determine which window Imamura stuck his head through.[22]

More important, no matter how we might play with it, Imamura's window metaphor is misleading for its binary, either/or quality. The question one wants to ask is what Imamura *believed*. Imamura attempted to theorize a collapse of producer and spectator that underpinned the interpenetration of fiction and documentary, a move deeply informed by wartime ideology. However, I am inclined to look elsewhere for explanations of situations where highly conventionalized public discourse transforms into the stuff of reality, where the hard style becomes hard reality. In the following section, I turn to two ideological discourses that bear on the creation and reception of representation in the subtlest of ways. Through analysis of representations of gender and violence, I show that it was a particular contingent in the theaters that accepted the hard style as hard reality.

"Sakura of the Same Class": The Gendered Charm of Screen Violence

Film historians who concentrate on story, style, and production history to the exclusion of the reception context leave the impression of a monolithic spectatorship. They construct a historical narrative of significant films enjoyed by a mass audience (presuming equal enjoyment by all members of that audience), with the size of that audience implicitly determining significance. However, people's responses to the films of the war period were far from uniform. Reception of Japanese films is exceedingly difficult to research, as documentation of audience responses is scarce or nonexistent. However, during the war at least two Japanese studios conducted detailed surveys of the people entering their movie theaters, and some of these documents have survived.

For example, much to the studio's frustration, Nichiei found that the proportion of women among spectators for the company's wartime documentaries remained consistently around 20 percent. During an internal discussion group at Nichiei attended by Imamura Taihei, Sekino Yoshio, Aihara Hideji, Shirai Shigeru, and various Nichiei staff members, the discussants raised the topic of gender differences in attendance figures.[23] They listened to a Nichiei staff member read the figures for several months of business at Marunouchi Nichiei Gekijō in 1943. The screenings were

grouped under weekly themes such as "Air Defense Certain Victory Week" and "Fighting Science Film Week." Attendance ranged between 7,228 and 13,345 people weekly, but women rarely filled more than a third of the seats. In fact, programs aimed specifically at women appear to have been the toughest to sell. The lowest weekly attendance given was for "Fighting Women Week"! The bill included one of the most famous documentaries of the period, *Record of a Nursery,* which was even written by a woman (Atsugi Taka). This program had the worst attendance record of the survey, with 5,340 men and only 1,888 women buying tickets. Obviously, these films were missing their intended target.

Toho's audience research discovered the same gender imbalance in attendance figures, with an average of 37.94 percent for women and 62.06 percent for men in 1943; this is nearly double the percentage of women in Nichiei audiences, perhaps because the Toho films are all narrative features.[24] Interestingly, Toho's documentation suggests that the famous films that are invariably mentioned in film history books as representative of the war period are precisely the ones women avoided. *Hot Wind* (Neppū; 1943), *General Katō's Falcon Fighters* (Katō hayabusa sentōtai; 1944), *Toward the Decisive Battle in the Sky* (Kessen no ōzora e; 1943), and Kurosawa's *Sugata Sanshirō* (1943) rarely drew more than 25 percent women. Instead, female moviegoers chose to attend screenings of productions that are rarely mentioned in the narratives of the national cinema history—films such as Naruse's *Shibaimichi* (1943) and *Hanako-san* (1943). Female attendance figures for these films were all in the high 40 percent to low 50 percent range. In this group, the only film that remains well-known to this day is *The Most Beautiful.* Perhaps this women's film would also have been left out of the standard history books had it not been directed by Kurosawa Akira.

Taking these data from Nichiei and Toho into consideration, we may conclude that success in the wartime film industry was based primarily on the passion of a certain kind of spectator: the adult male. In the previous section, we looked at documentary film to understand the style of the fiction film. We might also take the opposite approach. Before, we discovered a healthy continuity between the documentary and fiction cinemas, the most significant difference being primarily the latter's diegesis. Fiction films center on elaborate melodramas constructed out of family and human relationships, narratives buoyed in documentary space. What we find in this diegesis can in turn help us understand certain patterns in the documentaries themselves. For example, the fiction film *The War at Sea from Hawaii to Malaya* and the documentary *Young Soldiers of the Sky* are basically identical, save the former's melodrama. Both contain highly linear narrative

structures; both follow young boys who join the military, train hard, and set off for the war. The two films contain entire scenes that are virtually indistinguishable. At the same time, the more elaborate patterns possible in the fiction film make that film's narrative instructive for our approach to the documentary. In the feature film's constellation of relationships, we may discover an element of the style of the public discursive field deeply embedded in the documentary. Left implicit in the nonfiction form, the melodrama of the fiction film helps us uncover it.

Yamamoto Kajirō's *The War at Sea from Hawaii to Malaya* is among the most famous films in Japanese cinema. Toho marshaled all of its forces to commemorate the first anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. The spectacular battle scenes at the climax of the film were accomplished through the use of miniatures constructed by Tsuburaya Eiji, later known for his work on *Godzilla* and *Ultraman*. In an ironic reversal, his special effects have provided many images for unwitting postwar documentary filmmakers in search of Pearl Harbor footage. *The War at Sea from Hawaii to Malaya* has been regularly raided for clips to be used in documentaries and news broadcasts about Pearl Harbor over the intervening years. One often sees Tsuburaya's special effects footage presented as actual footage of the attacks, a testament to the documentary look of the wartime feature film. The story follows a young recruit who leaves his home to become a pilot like his cousin. During the difficult training he dreams of his mother and sisters, who quietly accept that he is no longer "theirs" but now belongs to the nation. His father is "present," but only in the altar that haunts the background—his death is never explained. The boy's cousin teaches the boy that he is nothing—only the emperor and the mission of the nation give his life meaning.

We can extrapolate the following principles of the strong public style from this description: (1) there will be no girlfriends, only mothers and sisters; (2) fathers will be sent to the background; and (3) friendship between men will be privileged. This pattern is strikingly repeated in the Pacific War cinema. In contrast, the American GI in Hollywood films is pitied for being single and naturally pining for the opposite sex. The soldier with pinups in his locker is a staple image, as is that of the poor grunt separated from his girl, and soldiers' relationships with their sweethearts figure centrally in American film narratives. However, in the Japanese war film, sexuality between men and women is generally disavowed, and the image of the mother is overvalued.[25] For their part, fathers (who have the potential to upset the mother-son dyad) have usually died in other wars or have suffered inexplicable natural deaths, or they are simply out of the picture. Of course,

there are exceptions. These conventions were not the result of ironclad regulations handed down by the Information Bureau. However, the exceptions themselves are often instructive. The most interesting romances of the wartime cinema are the international trysts found in the Li Hsianglan films, whose ideological complexities are readily apparent. One film that does feature a passionate father-son relationship is Ozu's *There Was a Father* (Chiki Ariki; 1942). However, contemporary critics picked up on the film's departure from convention; as Peter High reports, critics lambasted the film for the inappropriate way the father attempts to arrange a marriage for his son, who has been drafted and should be planning only on sacrifice for love of country.[26]

The strictures imposed on heterosexual romance left the friendship between comrades in arms as the privileged relationship in the style of the war film. As the soldiers endure the hardships of training and warfare, their friendship grows deeply emotional. Abe Yutaka's *Dawn of Freedom* takes this relationship to its logical end (and probable limit for its era). The sequence in which the main Filipino character says good-bye to his Japanese friend, who is about to depart for the battle on Corregidor, is shot like a love scene in a Hollywood romance. As florid music swells in the background, the two stare lovingly at each other and spout absolutely amazing lines:

JAPANESE SOLDIER (in Japanese): Now we must part company. You may not understand me now, but you must feel the mutual sympathies between us. That's all.

GOMEZ (in English): I know you are going to Corregidor and saying good-bye to me now, but I'm sorry I cannot understand what you are saying.

JAPANESE SOLDIER: Captain Gomez, please understand just this. Nippon and Philippines are not enemies.

GOMEZ: Nippon . . . Philippines.

JAPANESE SOLDIER: Nippon . . . Philippines.

[They draw close, hold hands and stare dreamily into each other's eyes in a pretty, backlit close-up.]

GOMEZ: Nippon . . . Philippines . . . Peace.

This love scene is set up with an extraordinary sequence at the beginning of the two soldiers' relationship. Bathing in a beautiful forest stream with other naked men, Gomez washes his burly body. Behind him, his Japanese friend mends Gomez's war-torn clothes with needle and thread. When Gomez thanks the Japanese soldier for his kindness, a nearby officer ends the scene with a surprising observation: "He makes a better housewife

than soldier!" *Dawn of Freedom* makes explicit what is only implied by the subtexts of other films.[27]

We have examined the issue of gender at both the level of spectatorship and the level of narrative. These representations of gender are easy to pick out in fiction films, but they also inform the documentary. The occasional use of narrative in documentaries conforms to the same patterns. Furthermore, the disavowal of male-female relationships and accompanying fascination for the friendships between soldiers is accompanied by a focus on powerful, youthful male bodies in both fiction and documentary. The question remains of what to do with these observations. Aside from the fact that the power relations they describe involve clearly unconscious aspects that complicate our conceptualization of the hard style, we can use them to examine a narrower, related area more relevant to the documentary. We know that the films of the war era appealed primarily to male spectators, so what of the feature so central to the war film, the representation of violence?

A given national cinema features a set of hardened, readily identifiable conventions for the representation of violence. These conventions change depending on the time period and vary from national cinema to national cinema. The fact that violence settles into convention has vast implications for producers and spectators, particularly in intense situations such as that of wartime Japan. In the preceding chapter, I showed how the real violence of the war was elided by a fetishization of strategy and indirect representations deploying metaphors and metonyms. This indirect approach was nascent in the early film *Japan in Time of Crisis* and elaborated in documentary and fiction film over the next decade. If we are to follow strictly the scenario laid out by James C. Scott (as discussed in the introduction to this volume), we must look for conscious reasons for the form these representations assumed; how did these representations meet the needs of those in power, and how did feigning interest in these images contribute to the survival of the powerless? Censorship is certainly one factor that explains why the war films look the way they do, but we must not let this limit our inquiry. The answer to this question might point to the fact that the films baldly lied about the true conditions of the war, which served a power structure bent on expansion at the expense of human lives. At the same time, although these images may have hidden the hurt, they also solicited desire for the direction of violence at others and the self.

The violence of the war period—filmic and profilmic—can be divided into modes that straddle two interrelated lines of inquiry: (1) What can and cannot be shown? and (2) What is atrocious and what is socially sanctioned? These lines shift depending on the audience, the culture, and the

historical moment, and in the case of wartime Japan we can think of the modes of violence as either sacrifice or massacre.[28] My use of these terms follows Marsha Kinder's compelling analysis in *Blood Cinema,* where she argues for their relevance for Spanish cinema. This impressive work has been particularly inspirational for my own study, as the parallels between Spain's fascist cinema under Franco and Japanese wartime cinema are striking. Reading the original formulation of sacrifice and massacre by Tzvetan Todorov through René Girard and Gilles Deleuze, Kinder describes a sacrifice violence that makes a spectacle of society's power over its members and a massacre violence that threatens to reveal society's essential contradictions and weaknesses.[29] In cinema, sacrifice violence is glamorized, whereas massacre violence must remain hidden.

Todorov's initial identification of these two types of violence appears in his study of Spain's conquest of the Americas. He applies these labels to distinguish the violence of the Inquisition from the genocide of some seventy million Native Americans. Like the Spanish case, Todorov's definition rings uncannily true for the conditions of Japan's "co-prosperity sphere" and its aesthetic:

> Sacrifice is a religious murder: It is performed in the name of the official ideology and will be perpetrated in public places, in sight of all. . . . The victim's identity is determined by strict rules. . . . The sacrificial victim also counts by his personal qualities, the sacrifice of brave warriors is more highly appreciated than that of just anyone. . . . The sacrifice . . . testifies to the power of the social fabric, to its mastery over the individual.
>
> Massacre, on the other hand, reveals the weakness of this same social fabric . . . ; hence it should be performed in some remote place where the law is only vaguely acknowledged. . . . The more remote and alien the victims, the better: they are exterminated without remorse, more or less identified with animals. The individual identity of the massacre victim is by definition irrelevant (otherwise his death would be a murder). . . . Unlike sacrifices, massacres are generally not acknowledged or proclaimed, their very existence is kept secret and denied. This is because their social function is not recognized. . . .
>
> Far from the central government, far from royal law, all prohibitions give way . . . revealing not a primitive nature, the beast sleeping in each of us, but a modern being . . . restrained by no morality and inflicting death because and when he pleases. The "barbarity" of the Spaniards has nothing atavistic or bestial about it; it is quite human and heralds the advent of modern times.[30]

Of these two types of violence, massacre most closely describes the reality of the war in Asia and the Pacific. Throughout the period, Americans on the home front had a sense of the brutality of the conflict in the Pacific thanks to the in-your-face violence of the U.S. war documentary;[31] in contrast, the Japanese media generally looked the other way. As an example,

consider the incident that has become iconic for the massacre violence of Japan's fifteen years of war: the invasion of Nanking. Americans had access to documentary footage of the events in Nanking. Two Americans, the Reverend John Magee and George Fitch, shot 16mm film of the occupation atrocities, and Fitch smuggled the film out of China.[32] Fitch edited the footage into short films that he used on lecture tours to raise money for the Red Cross and to inform the world about the problems in China. The footage also wound up in the hands of Capra's unit, which included them in *The Battle of China* and other films. Stills from the film showing some of the most atrocious violence also appeared in a *Life* magazine photo spread.[33] In addition to this documentary footage, Capra and others substituted a variety of shocking images—including clearly fictive ones—to embellish sequences about the massacre.

Japanese cameramen were also in Nanking, but by the late 1930s the violence they saw there was not permissible in the hard film style. So they looked the other way. The Tokyo Trial uncovered a telling story about these cameramen from the diary of an American who was in the occupied city at the time. In one entry, the writer observed a Japanese newsreel team shooting scenes around the city:

> January 8th: Some newspaper men came to the entrance of a concentration camp and distributed cakes and apples, and handed out a few coins to the refugees, and moving pictures were taken of this kind act. At the same time a bunch of soldiers climbed over the back wall of the compound and raped a dozen or so of the women. There were no pictures taken out back.[34]

This film unit might have belonged to the famous cinematographer Shirai Shigeru. He was in the city during the occupation to shoot the Nanking edition of Toho's documentary trilogy of city films. Shirai—the photographer for many important documentaries, from the Education Ministry's Kantō earthquake film to Kamei Fumio's *Kobayashi Issa*—arrived the day after Nanking fell. In his autobiography he describes the experience from the point of view of a cameraman with the problematic charge to record the glorious war results on film. Shirai knew what the public hard style required, as well as what it refused:

> In a wide field surrounded by a fence, a trench had been dug. Above that they were shooting people. One soldier's face was deep red with blood and held his arms up screaming. No matter how much he was shot, he held his arms up and kept screaming. It was like seeing a fearful display of determination. We saw soldiers killing other people; we saw all sorts of things. The next day, we started photographing a little bit, and shot a plane falling and other things, as well as Matsui's entry ceremony into the city. Residents were also there waving their hands and welcoming him. So we also waved back. They didn't want

to do this but there was nothing they could do. "Nothing we can do *[Mei fan zu]*" is what they said.

We didn't shoot everything we saw. Also, there were things that we took which were cut later. . . . I'm often asked, but it is a fact that I saw people shooting.[35]

Shirai ends this passage by writing that he saw much, much more, but cannot continue with such a "cruel story." The film he produced, the Nanking part of the Toho city trilogy, tailored its representations of violence to the regulations outlined in the preceding chapter. Back at home, Shimizu Shunji (Japan's most famous subtitler) also saw the Nanking violence in 1938. He had "access" not through physical presence on the scene, but as Paramount's subtitler for the Japanese market. During the war in China, and before the banning of American films, he was in charge of preparing Paramount's newsreels for distribution in Japan. This was primarily a subtitling job, but he would also self-censor the films before submitting them for official censorship. When he encountered scenes such as those that took place in Nanking that "obviously would not pass the censor," he cut them before submission.[36]

These stunning, if extreme, stories are archetypal examples of everyday documentary practice at home and at the front. We must de-emphasize the iconic significance of the events in Nanking and ask what these stories tell us about the general representation of violence during the war. There are no Japanese counterparts to such shockingly violent American documentaries as *Justice* (1945), *Kill or Be Killed* (circa 1944), *The Fleet That Came to Stay* (1945), and *With the Marines at Tarawa* (1945). The public discursive field did not allow space for the representation of this massacre violence, as it threatened the social fabric and its intrinsic "morality" and "order." When it was committed to celluloid, there were people like Shimizu tending the industrial gateway and ensuring that the images did not reach public screens.

If massacre violence was held at bay through elision, this did not mean that films of the war era contained no violence. Quite the opposite—the potentially upsetting reality of the war was disavowed through sacrifice violence. In *Blood Cinema,* Kinder draws on René Girard's *Violence and the Sacred* to elaborate Todorov's two brands of violence. Girard looks to the sacrificial violence of primitive societies to provide an explanation for the importance of religion and the positive function of violence in societies. Sacrificial violence points back to a generative act of violence and revolves around the singling out of a scapegoat. This individual is selected randomly, a fact that must be shrouded by the rituals that convert it into a spectacle absorbing the threat of reciprocal violence and giving the society structure

and stability. Thus rituals of sacrifice in religion or art become one of the ways a society makes sense of itself, preventing its deterioration into chaos. It is the relationship between the aestheticized sacrificial violence and its counterpart in the hidden, institutionalized massacre where Kinder is most original, and also where her description rings truest for Japanese cinema of the 1930s and early 1940s:

> Sacrificial ritual is used to justify modern massacre. Indeed, the opposition between sadism and masochism might be conceptualized as another way of representing the conversion of the institutionalized sadistic massacre with its anonymous victims, cruel and obscene acts, and relentless repetitions . . . into a highly fetishized, contractual sacrificial killing, featuring a carefully chosen scapegoat who becomes the most celebrated victim in history, one who is capable of absorbing all past and future acts of violence into this well-publicized masochistic ritual.[37]

In Japanese cinema, sacrifice violence is found most prominently in the feature film, with its individualized heroes and emotionally charged narratives. Sacrifice violence requires heroes, and the melodrama of fiction film sets the stage for individuals to face death bravely with wondrous music and blazing special effects. In contrast, documentary necessarily deals with the profilmic world, where, as Bill Nichols has noted, history hurts; the documentary's violence is the stuff of snuff films.[38] This makes its aestheticization uncommonly difficult. It rarely enjoys the feature film's vast control over lighting, costumes, acting, camera movement, and special effects, the tools that enable filmmakers to aestheticize death with ease. Violence against soldiers or civilians was written about, and even shown in still photos, but only in the context of individualized, ritual execution for the enemy (often by traditional sword) and heroic death for the Japanese soldier. This contextualization made the massacre violence appear legitimate rather than threatening—in other words, safely sacrificial. But control in documentary is limited, and the bodies it captures on film are all too real and vulnerable.

Sacrifice violence in Japanese documentary involves looking nearby. It is represented metaphorically (with traditional symbols of death, such as cherry blossoms) or metonymically (with graves, wooden urns, or shrines containing possessions of the dead). Both forms of representation interact with other conventions of the hard style. Of all the war documentaries I examined, only an early Fox-Movietone Japan production, *Victorious Japan* (Kagayaku Nippon; 1934), showed Japanese corpses. Kamei Fumio's suppressed *Fighting Soldiers* reportedly contained a scene in which Japanese soldiers burn the bodies of their fallen friends; however, this footage is

missing from the single print that surfaced decades after the war. *Nanking* was also said to have had a battlefield cremation scene—the power of which was heightened by crackling sync sound—but since the discovery of a print in the 1990s, we know that it refers to actual violence only through the conventionalized metonymic and metaphoric strategies.[39] Like other documentaries from the war against China, *Nanking* basically shows distant fighting, funerals, and soldiers carrying boxes of their comrades' ashes. After Pearl Harbor, movie narrations and songs could call for citizens' beautiful, sacrificial deaths, but visual representations became exceedingly indirect.

In the famous Japanese combat films such as *Malayan War Front: A Record of the March Onward, Oriental Song of Victory,* and *War Report from Burma,* the real fighting is elided through gaps in time and especially through maps with animated arrows representing both sides. Long sequences using these maps to describe the strategies and tactics of the battlefield stand in for obviously problematic documentary footage. Combat photography is usually reduced to views of Japanese shooting heavy artillery and rifles. The ferocity of the battles is only obliquely suggested with long scenes displaying metonymic substitutes: helmets, guns, fallen airplanes, burned-out trucks and tanks, and devastated bunkers strewn with abandoned belongings.

The example of the hit documentary *Sacred Soldiers of the Sky* (Sora no shinpei; 1942) is typical in its use of metaphor. It follows a group of boys through rigorous paratrooper training, topped off by a spectacular practice jump with a cast of hundreds. The thrilling flying sequences in this film inspired many young Japanese boys to join the air force, but the reality of paratroop jumps into enemy territory was disastrous. When they finally arrived at the front, many of these boys who had been swept away by the beauty and thrill of this film and others like it were shot before they hit the ground. The ugly fact of death could not be represented directly, for bloody bodies are not a pretty sight. Instead, filmmakers referred to death in more indirect, more aesthetically pleasing ways. After their vertiginous practice jump in *Sacred Soldiers of the Sky,* the divine paratroopers march away from the camera down a road lined with cherry trees. Blossoms flutter through the air like parachutes, a seductive, traditional symbol of beautiful death standing in for, calling for, the real thing. This comparison of life (to be specific, the end of life) to cherry blossoms was a typical way of representing death.

We can also look to related discourses connected to the documentary, such as film scores and the language of intertitles and narration. "*Sakura*

of the Same Class," a popular wartime song that Japanese sing to this day, provides an example of the kind of natural imagery used to aestheticize death. The first verse goes:

> You and I are *sakura* of the same class
> We bloom in the same military school garden
> Our readiness is that of blooming flowers that will fall
> Let's fall gracefully for our country.

The song "If We Go to the Ocean" was obligatory for sacrifice scenes; this lovely melody appears in more documentaries and feature films than the national anthem, but the words are disquieting:

> If we go to the ocean
> Corpses immersed in water
> If we go to the mountains
> Corpses enveloped in grass
> We will die for the Emperor
> Without looking back.[40]

In general, the Japanese vocabulary for referring to death at war was far more aesthetic than the clinical terms used in the English language (*casualty,* for example). Japanese men killed on the battlefield were *sange,* which literally translates as "fallen flower." The slaughtered masses of Japanese soldiers at Guadalcanal and Saipan were referred to as *gyokusai,* literally "crushed jewels." Tsurumi Shunsuke has translated *gyokusai* less literally as "glorious self-destruction."[41] Now these fallen soldiers' *eirei* (splendid spirits) or *sūkō na rei* (sublime souls) rest in shrines and temples all across Japan. These were some of the many methods that the mass media and popular culture deployed to seduce young Japanese men to their deaths.

There is no question of the effectiveness of these films. The newsreels' success at hiding the real violence and conditions of the war had something to do with people's acceptance of (not submission to) the terms of the public representations of the war. Deployed for recruitment, these films rallied their spectators around personal sacrifice and the ultimate desire for a beautiful death for the emperor and in defense of the homeland. Satō Tadao has written of his own cinematic seduction by the nation:

> Training scenes were an important part of many Japanese war films and *The War at Sea from Hawaii to Malaya* was no exception. As a sixth grader, I was so impressed by its semidocumentary treatment of pilot training that a few years later I enrolled in a similar Air Cadet Pre-Training School. However, my

> actual experience was entirely different, and each day was filled with brutal punishment. We were subjected to repeated slaps on the face and to the torture of endless calisthenics, and the NCOs constantly hit us with staves and ropes, often for personal gratification. This kind of torment caused a strange reaction among many of the boys. At first they would proudly mutter to themselves, "You bastards can't break me!" But later they turned into pure masochists only thinking, "Watch this! I'm going to show you what real bravery is!" The film had not only ignored the brutality of such training but also its cruel method of eliciting submission.[42]

It is the ultimate masochism of desiring the sacrifice of one's own life that links the representation of violence to the particular characterizations of gender uncovered above. Kinder notes that the Spanish fascist aesthetic has much in common with masochism as defined by Gilles Deleuze. In *Masochism: An Interpretation of Coldness and Cruelty,* Deleuze treats the work of Sade and Masoch as both literature and anthropology. He argues for the separation of Freud's unified masochism/sadism model, as both involve a qualitatively different aesthetic and psychology:

> The masochist's experience is grounded in an alliance between the son and the oral mother; the sadist's in the alliance of father and daughter. . . . Sadism stands for the active negation of the mother and the inflation of the father (who is placed above the law); masochism proceeds by a twofold disavowal, a positive, idealizing disavowal of the mother (who is identified with the law) and an invalidating disavowal of the father (who is expelled from the symbolic order).[43]

The Japanese war film conforms to the masochistic aesthetic as described by Deleuze by overvaluing the mother and removing the father, and this sets a complex dynamic into play. Kinder finds that oppositional filmmakers—like José Luis Borau and Luis Buñuel—use a sadistic aesthetic of brutal violence to intervene in the fascist cinema's masochistic beautification of sacrificial violence. A comparable process may also be found in the Japanese cinema, although with culturally specific variations.

Deleuze argues that the image of the mother, that focal point of plenitude and primary desire for the masochist, is unobtainable, and thus the ultimate masochistic desire must culminate in death. This is reminiscent of the old half joke about the kamikaze bravely flying off to sacrifice himself, only to cry for his mother—not the emperor—at the moment of his death. It is literally dramatized in *The Abe Clan* (Abe Ichizoku; 1938), in which a samurai about to commit ritual suicide is reassured by the superimposed memory of his smiling, toothless mother.[44] In the frames of the film world, mothers (not fathers) see their sons off to the war, with no intention of seeing them return. The mother-son dyad constantly comes up in related discourses as

well. For example, a two-page advertisement spread for *Dawn of Freedom* in *Eiga Junpō* emphasized the connection between the mother and sacrificial violence in its ad copy: "The mother of the Filipino soldiers of Manila calls out to her sons at the front line by microphone. 'Aaah, Mother,' cry the Filipino soldiers in the moment of their last breath. Their souls resurrected the blood of the Orient!" In a 1938 diaristic account of the battle for Nanking, Dōmei news cameraman Makijima Teiichi describes a close call. After graphically depicting the heroic death of an officer, Makijima begins to worry about his own death; the first image that comes to mind is his mother's face.[45] There are also indications that this peculiar representation of women is specific to the Fifteen-Year War. Peter High suggests that it emerged in women's magazines, such as *Shufu no Tomo* (Housewife's companion), at the time of the Manchurian Incident; these magazines offered novelistic reportage on the mothers of war heroes.[46]

Because soldiers have sisters and mothers instead of lovers, the love between soldiers becomes privileged. Japanese wartime films emphasize the camaraderie of the group and the beauty of the male body, while at the same time disavowing homosocial connotations through violence and action. This is as true for documentaries as it is for fiction films. The only time men and women mix is in innocent situations, such as at school and in the home. An exception is the emphasis on courting in the early *henshū eiga Japan in Time of Crisis,* but we have seen how these scenes only disparaged and negated male-female sexuality. In contrast, the same film pays special attention to the male body. In a sequence designed to encourage young boys to enlist in the army, there is a conscription scene featuring medical exams in which the camera focuses repeatedly on medium close-ups of muscular, flexing male bodies. Many documentaries similarly include bathing scenes, sweaty sports scenes, and scenes of men taking part in hard, physical labor. In this way, managing sexual energy becomes another aspect of discipline that funnels the young man's being into the war effort. The demanding exercises negate individuality, merging the trainees with the plenitude of the national polity; the training transforms youths, purifying them. It becomes both avenue to and substitute for the glamorous, heroic death.

This dynamic between threatening massacre violence and "purifying" sacrifice violence troubles Japanese to this day. Just as in Spain, this set of conventions would become the tool of oppositional filmmakers in the postwar period, for both fiction and documentary alike. On the narrative side, films such as Ichikawa Kon's *Fires on the Plain* (Nobi; 1959) unveiled the massacre violence of the war through crude parodies of sacrifice violence, here in the form of self-cannibalism. This was taken to sadistic heights in

Wakamatsu Kōji's films, especially *The Embryo Hunts in Secret* (Taiji ga mitsuryō toki; 1966), in which a man secludes himself in a room with a woman whom he tortures while fantasizing about his mother; the woman eventually kills him, and he dies in her lap in a fetal position. Masumura Yasuzō brought the masochistic aesthetic under a sharply clinical eye in his adaptation of Edogawa Ranpō's *Blind Beast* (Mōjū; 1969), which Kinder actually cites in *Blood Cinema*. In this film a blind, infantalized sculptor and his mother kidnap a beautiful model and hold her hostage in a hangar-like studio where sculpted body parts—eyes, ears, breasts—cover the walls. After the model and sculptor kill the mother (accidentally), they make increasingly violent love on a massive limbless, headless sculpture of a woman's body. The film climaxes in double suicide, with the artist lopping off the model's limbs before doing himself in. In many of these critical films, father figures are either absent or transformed into infantile states through incestuous relationships with their daughters or through their interactions with other lovers, a pattern Imamura Shōhei often plays with in his amusing films. Filmmakers continue to draw on the powerful mother-son dyad to many ends, including as a vehicle to speak of the nation—and its perversity.

Documentaries such as Hara Kazuo's account of military cannibalism in *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On* (Yuki yukite shingun; 1987) and films about the forced prostitution of Japanese and Korean women, such as Sekiguchi Noriko's *Sensō Daughters* (Senjō no onnatachi; 1990) and Yamatani Tetsurō's *Okinawan Harumoni* (Okinawa no harumoni; 1979), testify to the continuing threat of the war's massacre violence. The makers of these kinds of films have met resistance in their attempts to bring massacre violence into the light of the projector. The central character of Hara's film even resorts to beating war stories out of veterans. The same politics of exposure informs the awards presented at film festivals, as is illustrated by the fact that Korean documentarist Byun Young-joo's film on comfort women, *Murmuring* (1995), won the Yamagata Documentary Film Festival's Ogawa Shinsuke Prize. When the film was shown in Tokyo's Higashi-Nakano Box Theater, there were telephone threats from right-wing protesters, and an incident involving a fire extinguisher took place inside the theater during the first showing.[47] These efforts on the part of a film festival, a distributor, and a theater were institutional attempts to keep the memory of massacre violence from sliding into hidden spaces preserved long after the war's end.

The examples cited above all come from postwar films; however, there were wartime filmmakers who pointed to the violence of the war in cleverly oblique ways. One example that draws on the power of the mother-son

dyad to critique sacrifice violence implicitly is one of the most famous scenes from the war cinema, the conclusion of Kinoshita Keisuke's *Army* (Rikugun; 1944). Kinoshita stages a typical "separation" scene for the climax of his film, with the son leaving his mother and boldly marching off to the front. However, when the son merges into the column of compatriots marching to their collective deaths, his mother frantically searches through the young soldiers to find him, refusing to accept his sacrifice. Certainly this scene engaged deeply felt emotions in many spectators in 1944. Not surprisingly, it got Kinoshita into some trouble with the authorities, and it points to the direction we now turn: toward moments when the hidden discursive field comes into view.

[5] *The Last Stand of Theory*

If the Iwo Jima flag raising represents the final stages of the war for many Americans, the comparable image in Japan might be a shot from *Nippon News No. 177*. This was a record of the October 1943 ceremony held to send off young students to the battlefields. That year's Student Mobilization Order made possible the conscription of liberal arts students to refresh depleted troops as Japan began losing the war; science majors and students in training to be in teachers were exempted. There were ceremonies all over Japan, but the newsreel cameras (nearly twenty of them) focused on the massive event sponsored by the Education Ministry at a stadium adjacent to Meiji Shrine. Prime Minister Tōjō and Minister of Education Okabe Nagakage were in attendance as thousands upon thousands of uniformed students marched into the stadium in formation. The stands were filled with more than sixty thousand spectators, grouped by uniform. *Nippon News No. 177* aimed to capture this display of the state's power over its citizenry, striving (rather unsuccessfully) for the spectacle of *Triumph of the Will,* which was the film's obvious model. However, the marching thousands in the newsreel are clearly youthful students in soldiers' uniforms, and their representative steps out from the ranks and cries out, "We do not expect to return." The ceremony takes place on a rainy autumn day—a good day for a funeral—and the proceedings have a solemn air about them as the young men splash through puddles with their guns. Once the students fall into formation, the politicians' speeches begin. In the subsequent sequence, one single shot stands apart from all the others: we see a boy standing at attention in medium close-up, and the camera slowly tilts down his mud-spattered back to his tattered leggings (Figure 14). The cameraman seems to be hinting at the miserable fate of these boys in a quiet moment of protest; at least that is the way the image has been read by commentators in many documentaries and news reports. However, the recollection of the cinematographer himself, Hayashida Shigeo, might give us pause:



Figure 14. *Nippon News No. 177.*

> While shooting it is not clear what I was thinking. Because of the considerable length of time to think while turning the camera, it might be that I was thinking of the misery of the war for so many soldiers going off to fight. Thus, I may have unconsciously put that into the shot of columns marching through the water. This is used more than any other scene for the deploying of the students. It confirms that the mission of those days' newsreels was to raise the fighting spirit and achieve war results. We can only wonder how this news was evaluated in those days.[1]

How indeed? What may have read as an antiwar statement quietly inserted into a typical newsreel could be the expression of something less direct, more vague. I have suggested that the terms of domination build resistance into the substance of that domination, and that public discourse always contains coded versions of dissonant discourse from hidden spaces, a polysemy that public forms of representation strive to cover with ideological clarity and iconographic images of naturalized domination and willing submission. In a sense, the preceding chapters have been preparation for an analysis of how resistance took shape in noisy debate and quiet subversion. In this chapter we will examine how public acts of resistance, best represented in the film world by Prokino, go underground, leaving the historian with a complex job of analysis and interpretation. How does one read, for example, studio memoranda about mundane daily operations sprinkled everywhere with the same spiritless stock phrases about "times of emergency," "working diligently for a glorious Greater East Asia" and "defeat of the American enemy"? Where does the fighting spirit end and the automatic, obligatory nod begin? It is a difficult question. However, several critics and filmmakers have pointed to answers. Starting with this chapter on criticism and theory, I highlight entry points into the space of the hidden, focusing on those rare instances when the hidden discourse emerges into view. In chapter 6, I turn to films that appear to subvert their propaganda value. I begin here where many Prokino members themselves did—with *tenkō,* or what could be called ideological conversion. This elaborate, bureaucratic mechanism allowed dissenters an avenue to return to the public world without severe retribution. In this phenomenon of the apparent ideological break, we will assume continuity.

Tenkō: Gateway to Hidden Spaces

Tenkō is generally defined as ideological apostasy. Scholars of American cinema may find their analogue for this in the postwar blacklist and the Hollywood Ten; however, as a term of considerable currency, from the

conversions of leftists in the early 1930s to the demise of the student movement in the 1970s, *tenkō* presents its own problems, which historians of modern Japan have studied quite thoroughly. Although scholars of Japanese film generally sidestep the topic, filmmakers provided some of the most spectacular instances of *tenkō.* For example, Mizoguchi Kenji seemed to undergo a swift about-face between his leftist tendency films—*Metropolitan Symphony* (Tōkai kōkyōgaku; 1929) and *And Yet They Go* (Shikamo karera wa yuku; 1930)—and many of the films he directed in the 1930s, such as *The Dawn of Manchukuo and Mongolia* (Manmo kenkoku no reimei; 1932) and *Genroku Chūshingura* (1941). Indeed, Satō Tadao asserts that all postwar democratic films were the products of *tenkōsha* (apostates), as opposed to new directors.[2] The phenomenon of *tenkō* is an unusually formalized instance, codified into the legal system of the most repressive wings of the state, of the need for displays of obeisance in public representations no matter what the dominated keep to themselves.

Tenkō arose in the repressive atmosphere of the early 1930s, when huge numbers of leftist activists were surveilled, bullied, and imprisoned.[3] The originary moment for *tenkō* came with a spectacular incident involving Sano Manabu and Nabeyama Sadachika, two leaders of what remained of the Japan Communist Party in the wake of a sustained period of police harassment. Locked up for their political activities in the sweeping crackdowns of 1928–29, the two announced from their cells in 1933 that they were formally and publicly breaking ties with the party. The apostasy of these party leaders sent shock waves throughout the political community, and within a month 548 other political prisoners followed their lead. It did not take long for the government to realize the value of *tenkō* as a tool for dealing with the left, and it soon became an official policy for handling so-called thought crimes. In late 1933, the government even created classes of *tenkōsha,* recognizing a spectrum of underlying motivations, from highly reasoned shifts in beliefs to religious conversions to those who simply gave up political activities altogether and retreated to work and family.

Postwar Japanese research on the subject of *tenkō* is often identified with philosopher Tsurumi Shunsuke, although it involved the contributions of many other intellectuals as well. This work was part of a massive project devoted to the study of *tenkō* undertaken by the journal *Shisō no Kagaku* (Science of thought). During the 1950s, Tsurumi defined *tenkō* as a "conversion which occurs under the pressure of state power" and features two elements: force and spontaneity.[4] This is to say that it is deeply imbricated in the relationship of individuals and the nation. In this sense, Tsurumi's original formulation corresponds roughly to Homi Bhabha's pedagogical and performative temporalities of the nation in interesting ways. However,

subsequent uses of *tenkō* emphasized individual conversions through biographical profiles, a strategy that blinds us to important continuities and factors outside of repressive state force. In other words, the conception of *tenkō* as "conversion" or "apostasy" implies that these progressive, liberal intellectuals violently renounced their previous beliefs for ultranationalism; this position asks, What went wrong? (This is an individualized version of the "modernization theory" that posed the same question at the level of political system.) More recently, scholars have invoked *tenkō* while hesitating to grant it critical weight in order to emphasize continuities in thought.[5] Although they work solidly within a biographical mode, they shift attention away from sudden breaks and toward critical analysis that recognizes the seeds of nationalistic thought in earlier, cosmopolitan writing. They also point to the discursive field within which intellectuals worked. Depending on the point of view, this field was either the very product of these intellectuals or a public arena that increasingly came under the strictures of the state. We can assume that both are true, I think, and look to a variety of intellectuals in the film world to recognize a spectrum of positions in relation to the growing ideological univocity of public representation.

In the twenty years during which the Peace Preservation Law was in effect, three thousand people were convicted for their political activities or beliefs. However, thirteen thousand were detained and released in early stages of the judicial process through the device of *tenkō.* Most important, of about five hundred NAPF or KOPF members arrested for political activities, more than 95 percent are said to have undergone *tenkō.*[6] These organizations included all of the members of Prokino, so we may safely assume that *tenkō* was a common experience for filmmakers and film critics. *Tenkō* was an expression of the government's continuing need to unify the nation by bringing dissenters back into the fold. The apparent "shift in direction" of some, such as Imamura Taihei, may actually represent the rational development of their previous thought brought into the service of the state. For others, *tenkō* was the gateway to safer, hidden spaces—but a few filmmakers did not go quietly.[7]

Iwasaki Akira: Looking to the Edge

After the 1931 Manchurian takeover, police pressure on the left increased and the critics and filmmakers of Prokino were arrested one by one. With their *tenkō,* official or quietly private, they moved into various nooks and crannies of the film industry. Atsugi Taka and Komori Shizuo became screenwriters, Atsugi at GES and Komori at the Kyoto JO Studio (and

then Toho when JO combined with PCL). Furukawa Yoshinobu wrote plays for the stage, and Matsuzaki Keiji became a producer for PCL and Toho, bringing Noto Setsuo and Shino Shōzō with him. Sasa Genjū joined the Rikagaku Kenkyūjo, a group of top scientists (including Nishina Yoshio, the man who later led Japan's atomic bomb program). After playing the familiar role of the group's film unit, Sasa joined GES and served as editor of *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* and *Bunka Eiga*. Iwasaki Tarō (Namiki Shinsaku) started working at GES as well. As these individuals spread into other sectors of the film world, they left the rowdiness of Prokino's dissent behind. Only Iwasaki Akira obstinately continued writing articles critical of the increasingly militaristic cinema, and this posture eventually got him in serious trouble.

After the collapse of Prokino, Iwasaki Akira continued his career as a major film critic, publishing articles, participating in roundtables, and writing books. His commitment to critical writing was renewed by a trip to China, where Lu Xun's earlier translation of his seminal article "Cinema as a Method of Propaganda and Agitation" had gained him fans among Chinese left-wing filmmakers.[8] He later stated: "Starting at this moment I understood the substance of Japanese in China, Japanese and Chinese, or rather Japanese imperialism. I can say I discovered Asia for the first time."[9] One of Iwasaki's major works, *Eigaron* (On cinema), appeared in 1936. He undertook this book at the request of the philosopher Tosaka Jun, who was editing an extensive book series on all aspects of materialism. Iwasaki's was one of the projects of the Yuibutsu Kenkyūkai (Materialism Study Society, or Yuiken), of which Tosaka was a leader. Iwasaki joined the society and, as one of several members interested in cinema, led a weekly seminar called the Eiga Riron Kenkyūkai (Film Theory Study Society), in which students and young workers studied various aspects of film theory. All of this work involved a Marxist approach to film study and criticism, but it also evacuated any practical political activism. The meetings of the Film Theory Study Society, for example, were held legally, with all the necessary permissions. In the historical section of *Eigaron,* Iwasaki discusses Prokino as a politicized film movement, but does not place it at a teleological apex of cinema's essence, as Prokino's own publications had.[10] In the first edition of *Eigaron,* Iwasaki is also critical of the growing militarism in Japanese film, but his criticism is somewhat tempered by the environment—in his postwar revised edition he is far more aggressive. Drawing on the bounty of examples from the intervening years, the postwar reworking is similar in spirit to the original but displays more anger.

Other critics were much less willing to challenge the public pressures. When the rumblings of government regulation and forced amalgamation

began shaking the film industry, Iwasaki was one of the few to oppose such movements publicly, in appearances and articles such as "Tōsei no 'Kōka': Nachisu no Eiga Seisaku" (The "effect" of regulation—Nazi film policy).[11] Other film critics' reluctance to speak the obvious is dramatically apparent in a 1936 *zadankai* sponsored by *Eiga to Gijutsu,* a magazine oriented toward both professional technicians and amateur enthusiasts. As the war impinged more and more on the lives of its professional audience, the magazine responded with articles written by cameramen in China and with *zadankai* about the changing role of nonfiction cinema. In the midst of a rambling discussion about newsreels, Iida Shinbi brought up the Shanghai Incident as a vague example of how editing can change the meaning of a scene. Iida simply meant showing things other than actual battle scenes, but Iwasaki quickly turned Iida's example on its head:

> Even with the Shanghai Incident news you just mentioned, in the newsreel a friend saw in France, a scene of the Japanese Army troops fighting would come, and then Chinese refugees fleeing this way and that would appear. So this country Japan would seem to be really warlike. In that kind of film, the spectators whistle and yell catcalls. We can say that in this the ideology of the editor appears.[12]

Iwasaki not only flatly stated what was being censored from Japanese newsreels—indeed, editing was supposed to be the topic of this conversation—he also cleared the way for a discussion of the ideological implications of editing the war out of the war film. Everyone else in the group pretended not to notice, swiftly moving on to safer conversation.

The newsreel and *bunka eiga* would become the object of Iwasaki's fiercest criticism after the China Incident. For example, just three months after open hostilities commenced, the *Miyako Shinbun* asked Iwasaki to write a four-part series on the new role of news film in light of the war's sudden escalation.[13] The series, "Sensō to Eiga" (War and cinema), is a plea for a humanist war film in the tradition of Pabst and Milestone. However, Iwasaki reserved his harshest criticism, voicing it later in an article in the prestigious *Bungei Shunjū* in October 1938. The journal's cautious editors heavily edited the original manuscript, substituting so many *fuseji* (*X*s) for problematic words that some passages became unintelligible. As one of the only public attacks on the wartime documentary's complicity in concealing the true conditions of the China War, this article deserves to be represented here by an extended quote:

> The most fundamental discontent we constantly feel is elsewhere. The point of view of today's news film simply stops with superficial "reportage." Therefore, in actuality, scientific, truthful reportage is XX. . . . In this fact

> [that filmmakers aligned themselves with the directives of the government] the XX and the XXXX of the news film in today's incident is hinted at. Finally, from the beginning this XXXXXX reportage was not made a motive, and the demands of the people regarding the Incident were not XX. Simply put, the government's news regulation comprises one wing of today's wartime culture system.
>
> No matter how you look at it, we must face toward the periphery. There, in this sense, we will observe today's news film, and the greatest XXXX we will remember is that XXXXXXXXXXX.
>
> Therefore, in those extremely rare instances when the image of a homeless puppy searching for food on street corners that have been turned into castle ruins because of gunfire, when the conditions of an ocean of Chinese refugees escaping the theater of fighting appear on the screen, they will appeal to the spectator who holds uncommonly deep, vibrant, human feelings.
>
> We do not want to see the news film's external details of the front lines, but what is on the side, over there.[14]

Like all wartime films, passages like this must be examined at their peripheries. Iwasaki invites as much in the last sentence. As the war escalated toward a confrontation with the United States, Iwasaki increasingly had to measure his words. After the war he noted: "At that time, in my heart I always said to myself, if I go this far it will be okay, if I write it this way it will be inside the bounds of safety; I had this kind of self-regulation and vigilance. My pen communicated it, and my writing started veiling the most fundamental things."[15] Iwasaki's last book of the war era, *Eiga to Genjitsu* (Film and reality), reads as though the author cannot say exactly what he means. However, the way filmmakers aligned themselves with the politics of waging war clearly frustrated Iwasaki, and his anger ultimately focuses on the documentary:

> A key factor in the prosperity of the *bunka eiga,* this re-recognition of cinema's qualities of "actuality" and "record," actually has an established theory. This is certainly a fact. However, particularly on the occasion of this massive historical happening we call an Incident, those qualities of "record" and "actuality" were utilized to the utmost to meet the aspiration of eyewitnessing this reality happening across the sea, a thirst for knowledge of and fierce concern for the wager placed on the entire national fate. On the one hand, among serious spectators up to now, the strongly latent feelings of dissatisfaction regarding the falsity and lies of fiction films became a psychological foundation. On top of this, on the occasion of the Incident the producers who lost their creative spirit vacillated in intimidation upon hearing the call for regulation and national policy, leaving the feature film in a pitiable, atrophied condition. This dug in the spurs, naturally inciting the exaltation of the *bunka eiga.*[16]

For this unbending critical spirit, Iwasaki was arrested in January 1940. He had been throw in jail a few times during his Prokino days, al-

ways to be released shortly thereafter. This time was different. He was given no specific reasons for his arrest, although he could imagine it had something to do with things like Prokino and Yuiken (the latter organization disintegrated when thirty-five of the members, including Tosaka, were arrested in late 1938). Finally, after Iwasaki had spent several months in jail, two detectives with the High Special Police began questioning him about his trip to Shanghai and his meetings with the Yuiken Film Theory Study Group. His interrogators insisted the meetings were illegal, Communist gatherings, even though proper papers had always been filed and everyone knew plainclothes police sat in on the meetings and took notes. He finally got a straight answer about the reason for his imprisonment one day while he was talking over a hibachi with one of the detectives: "Iwasaki, you didn't have to, but you went around opposing the Film Law and arguing with Hayashi Fusao; that's why you ended up here."[17]

The pace of interrogation was leisurely, and after several more months in jail Iwasaki was finally told to write a *shuki* (memorandum) confessing his wrongdoings and expressing his *tenkō.* At first, he took the task less than seriously; he believed there were plenty of things the police had no right to pry into, but he hid his rage and began writing. He was expected to cover the entirety of his life, starting at birth and ending with his current life in prison, and the seventy-page document he produced took him more than a month to write. When he was finished, the officer in charge took one look at the pages, tossed them back at him, and told him to try harder. His jailers gave him the *shuki* written by two previous inmates, one by Okuda Muneshi, a political activist, and the other by the philosopher Funayama Shin'ichi, another member of Yuiken. Both were considerably longer than what Iwasaki had spent a month writing, and both went into great detail on theoretical issues. After eight months in jail, and after he had written a second memo for *tenkō,* Iwasaki was convicted, sentenced, and transferred to prison. By this time, he was suffering from malnutrition; he also had a skin disease and was losing his sight. He spent another five months in confinement. After his release, Iwasaki restricted his criticisms to the safety of nonpermanent representations in hidden spaces, first in house arrest and then in a job with Amakasu's Manchurian Film Association. This group was a magnet for both the militant right wing and the submerged left wing (which could identify with the plight of Chinese under Japanese rule). With this de facto *tenkō,* Iwasaki worked quietly with the Man'ei Tokyo office until the end of the war.

The rest of the industry quieted down and reserved expressions of discontent for the spaces of the hidden. Other critics saw an example of the consequences of open expression of discontent in Iwasaki's arrest and

imprisonment, as well as the fate of Prokino before that. Iwasaki's autobiography of the war years ends with an excellent example of the nature of the private spaces. After Iwasaki was released from prison, some of his friends threw a party to celebrate his liberation. In his autobiography he records each of their names—they include Kinugasa Teinosuke, Aoyama Toshio, Shimazu Yasujirō, Tsumura Hideo, Tasaka Tomotaka, Iida Shinbi, Uchida Tomu, and Kitagawa Tetsuo—and explains that his publishing of this list is far more than an expression of gratitude; rather, no matter what images of the 1930s and 1940s younger Japanese may hold, he wants them to realize how, "in the form of a reception welcoming my release from prison, some people protested the 'Film Law' and 'Peace Preservation Law' and other people at least did not hesitate to express their disagreement."[18] Iwasaki's record of the party is a fleeting glimpse of the hidden discourse of discontent, a small, quiet get-together where simple participation meant everything from outright protest to vaguer expressions of disquiet or frustration. These hidden discourses were written in private spaces and in innocent disguises such as Iwasaki's liberation-from-prison party. However, because these kinds of meetings and events are rarely committed to the historical record, and because writers like Iwasaki who express their thoughts more or less directly are extremely rare, we are forced to turn to public representation itself for moments when the hidden discourse of discontent emerges.

Tosaka Jun: Epistemology of the "Image Faculty"

The spectacle of Prokino eclipsed the short burst of discussion between Shimizu Hikaru and Iwasaki Akira, but at this juncture we must return briefly to the *Eiga Zuihitsu* table. As we have seen, there was a Kyoto chapter of Prokino, and its film about the funeral of Yamamoto Senji was among the best the movement produced. After the movement's suppression, Kyoto's film community maintained a strongly theoretical bent throughout the 1930s.[19] This identity helped the community's members conduct their activities long after the total suppression of the proletarian film movement. These individuals might appear to contitute a single group based on their Japanese nationality, moving from the bolshevism of NAPF to a Popular Front fighting Japanese-style fascism with theory and pedagogy. However, it is far more profitable to see the work of these Kyoto intellectuals as continuous with the contentious *Eiga Zuihitsu* debate, in terms of both regional identity and artistic proclivity. Iwasaki and his comrades with cameras went on to spearhead the proletarian film movement out of Tokyo; Shimizu and his Kyoto collaborators concentrated on proj-

ects that celebrated the cutting edge of modernism in an age of reaction and crisis. The Kyoto scene is best represented by two philosophers, Tosaka Jun and Nakai Masakazu, for both their theory and the art and activism it informed. Both men turned to documentary film to think through their most pressing problems, and in some sense their respective positions continue the opposition structuring the *Eiga Zuihitsu* debate. As Makino Mamoru suggests, the collaborative projects centering on these two philosophers could be seen as a last stand of intellectuals in the film world resisting Japan's slow descent into war and its culture of violence.

Tosaka Jun established the Yuibutsuron Kenkyūkai (Materialism Study Society, or Yuiken) in October 1932. He and fellow philosopher Miki Kiyoshi emerged from the Kyoto Group, which was based on the philosophy of Nishida Kitarō. Tosaka came to Marxism through Miki's influence, and as Nishida's philosophy became increasingly aligned with the war effort both Miki and Tosaka broke away and started off on their own direction. The initial membership of Yuiken included some forty intellectuals from all walks of life, representing such diverse disciplines as history, philosophy, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, theater, music, film, medicine, and ethnology. The organization held study groups and seminars and published a journal called *Yuibutsuron Kenkyū* (The study of materialism).[20] In addition to the periodical, Yuiken produced a massive book series on materialism that eventually included approximately fifty volumes. This sphere of theoretical activity included the cinema. Iwasaki's post-Prokino contribution to Yuiken included his film theory study seminars and his book *Eigaron,* and other contributors to *Yuibutsuron Kenkyū* often wrote on the subject of cinema as well. Because of Yuiken's largely academic nature, it escaped the suppression suffered by overtly political groups like Proka and Prokino. In fact, as activists found political organizing increasingly dangerous, some of them poured their energy into more intellectual pursuits like Yuiken.

However, Yuiken's members' Marxism and the noisy critique of government policy by people like Tosaka inevitably drew attention. The group's activities were conducted legally, with proper permissions for meetings and censorship of publications, but affiliation with Yuiken gradually became risky. Secret police reports from the time confirm how closely the members were being watched. As state pressure grew in the first half of the decade, many people left the society in 1935, and the composition of the group shifted to those interested primarily in materialism. These developments coincided roughly with the attempted military coup of the 26 February Incident and the Seventh Thesis coming out of the Soviet Union, which called for the creation of a Popular Front in a global fight against fascism.

The development of a Popular Front was a tall order for Japanese Marxists, whose political activities had only recently been shut down through imprisonment, violence, and the successful operation of *tenkō*. It was only in the previous year that the membership of Proka had been arrested. In a 1936 essay, Tosaka writes:

> Today's *culture movement occurring in the Popular Front* is actually nothing other than the current *Popular Front occurring in the culture movement*. This is to say, political activities have to some degree merged in their own way with the Popular Front in the form of the culture movement. . . . This is the problem of the *movement form* combining the culture movement's liberalism and antifascism, along with, of course, the problem of *culture content* which should have a liberalist, antifascist style.[21]

This translated into a final separation of theory and practice. Under Tosaka's leadership, Yuiken had a largely Leninist orientation; the group strove to combine dialectics, logic, and epistemology and to bring philosophy to a Leninist stage. However, shutting out the possibility of a Spanish- or French-style Popular Front left Yuiken with the sphere of thought as its fundamental base. In this way, Yuiken became a group interested in all aspects of culture and devoted to a critical, scientific spirit intent on preventing the cultural vandalism the members saw in Japan's apparent fascist trends.[22] Not surprisingly, it came under increasing pressure from authorities and spontaneously disbanded in February 1938 when most of the members were arrested. In an attempt to continue their theoretical activities under a different banner, they established a new journal called *Gakugei* (Arts and sciences), which opened the research of the group up to include even more on entertainment, culture, and art. Even though many articles on the cinema had appeared in the new journal's predecessor, one short burst of discussion in the pages of *Gakugei* attracted considerable attention.

The debate took Tosaka's first attempts to write about cinema as a departure point. His first article opened the May 1936 premier issue of *Eiga Sōzō* (Film creation), a *dōjinshi* devoted to film theory and the study of scenarios.[23] Makino Mamoru has called *Eiga Sōzō* Prokino's "final fortress."[24] Of the thirty-seven core members of the group publishing the journal, twenty-two were former Prokino activists, including Kitagawa Tetsuo, Komori Shizuo, Kurihara Shōko, Namiki Shinsaku, Iwasaki Akira, Atsugi Taka, and Ueno Kōzō. The non-Prokino *dōjin* included Murayama Tomoyoshi, Imamura Taihei, Yamamoto Satsuo, and Imai Tadashi. Needless to say, the police kept a close eye on the group.[25] There was obviously a close relationship between *Eiga Sōzō* and *Yuibutsuron Kenkyū*; outside of

Tosaka's contributions, there were ads for Yuiken's journal in each issue of *Eiga Sōzō,* and the two journals also shared many authors. The goal of *Eiga Sōzō,* as stated in the first editors' afterword, was to create "a space for the decisive discussion of real issues *[kessen no ba],* for the work of establishing a theory of film art in terms of the creation of cinema as an art in which the truth of meaning occurs."[26]

Tosaka contributed two articles that bookended *Eiga Sōzō*'s run, with "Eiga no Shajitsuteki Tokusei to Taishusei" (Cinema's characteristic realism and its popularity) in the first issue and "Eiga Geijutsu to Eiga: Abusutorakushon no Sayō E" (Film art and film: Toward the operation of abstraction) in the last issue. This work came out on the heels of his books *Kagakuron* (On science) and *Kagaku Hōhōron* (On the scientific method). With a nod to Terada Torahiko's early theory, Tosaka grounds his approach in the first *Eiga Sōzō* article with a discussion of the properties that set cinema apart from other art forms:

> First, more than anything else, its *jisshasei*—this regeneration of present-day reality—is important. In the end, this *jisshasei* itself gives cinema its particular artistic value. . . . Speaking only of the actuality effect of natural phenomena from daily life, other art forms end only in a mimicry, a trivialism, and a creeping realism, whereas cinema brandishes a slashing artistic sword point. Regarding natural phenomena, the screen teaches humanity the goodness of the world's material properties, the delights in the movement of substance. These are the kinds of things we see in everyday life, but notice their goodness for the first time when they appear on the screen.[27]

Tosaka avoids Terada's naïveté—his assumption that the nonfiction film remains free of convention—by focusing precisely on the issue of *fūzoku.* The term literally means "customs and manners," but Tosaka uses it in the broadest of senses. In its popular meaning, *fūzoku* has much to do with the mores of society, and thus it implicitly indicates eroticism, pleasure, and the movement of desire. This is one of the key things that make the movies so fascinating, and also what contributes to their lowly status among the arts. Tosaka goes to great lengths to assert that the contemporary debates over whether film is an art and whether nonfiction film is cinematic art are entirely beside the point. This was at the time when *Olympia* woke the Japanese film world to the possibility of nonfiction film art, so such discussions were taking place in all the film journals. Tosaka throws cold water on these debates, suggesting they will never provide a strong basis for the project of a progressive film criticism. Instead, Tosaka argues that "film as art" is only one of the medium's aspects; a far more fundamental issue is film's function as a method of cognition, and this is where cinema's epochal significance lies.

Tosaka attempts to shift the emphasis of serious film criticism from less-than-meaningful debates on "film art" to epistemology, a kind of science. For Tosaka, this is the most pressing problem for film theory, and it also promises to advance cinema's reputation along the way. The advent of cinema has meant a completely novel epistemological faculty for humanity, a revolution that far overshadows simplistic questions about its aesthetic values in comparison to other arts. What kind of role will this new method of cognition play in the history of human knowledge? And what is the role of film theory vis-à-vis this qualitatively new realism? In a 1937 article for *Nippon Eiga,* Tosaka writes:

> Culturally speaking, a realistic cognition method like cinema that actually reproduces reality as it is—put simply, with a practicality, a familiarity, a vulgarity—becomes held as low-class. However, the cinematic function fundamentally reformed the engineering and technological condition of cognition, and this observation takes the situation in the opposite direction. The novel excellence of cognition's technological, engineering-like conditions . . . must force us to rethink the meaning of realism and cognition, in terms of art as well. . . . Thus for the first time we can make out cinema's culturally positive, active meaning; we can understand cinema's cultural value; and we can discover cinema's new cultural dignity.[28]

In this way, Tosaka lays the groundwork for approaching cinema at the most fundamental level, for analyzing how cinema's *jisshasei* captures the materiality of social life. This is to study how films make meaning and see the function of cinema at the level of ideology. Although only beginning this project, Tosaka frames it in the context of the cinematic mode that emphasizes "custom" in its content and makes overt claims for its *jisshasei*: the *bunka eiga*.

In his article published in the final issue of *Eiga Sōzō,* Tosaka decries the rhetoric surrounding the nonfiction film.[29] He starts by noting that he has finally discovered what has puzzled him about this concept of *bunka eiga*. These films are supposedly blessed with "cultural" content, but the term actually refers to films being used as a method of the government's cultural policy. It is only when frank disclosure of intent is disavowed—as in the "propaganda film"—that anyone thinks of a "cultural" film. This tendency to veil cultural policy in the trappings of the innocent-looking "education film" and "science film" may be brilliant cultural policy, but it is also eminently suspicious. Tosaka does not trust the *bunka eiga* because the films always hide something. In the same passage, he acknowledges the sudden rise in the reputation of the news film and points out that it largely has to do with reportage of the war: "There are stupid people who insist the war is producing a new beauty, and that war news is expanding into a

new art; we should not follow stupid people. The cognition that lends the news film its cinematic value has been prepared long before the war news came onstage."[30]

At this point, other critics jumped in. After Tosaka laid the groundwork for an epistemology of cinema, various members of Yuiken picked up on his ideas and began to elaborate them. The short but lively discussion that ensued became known as the "film epistemology debate." It was set off by an April 1938 *Gakugei* article by Ishihara Tatsurō titled "Ari no Mama ni Miru to Iu Koto ni Tsuite" (On seeing things just as they are).[31] Ishihara argued that when art and science are unified, cognition stagnates; segregation of the two deepens cognition, and scientific, material cognition is ultimately what renders artistic value. In the *Gakugei* July issue, Ueno Kōzō published a response that was basically a summary of an earlier essay series he had written for *Eiga Sōzō* criticizing Tosaka's epistemology of art and cinema.[32] Although Ueno wrote a number of articles responding to the ideas of Tosaka and the others—he even collected them in a book titled *Eiga Ninshikiron* (Film epistemology)—the main thrust of his critique is simple, and he does not significantly develop his argument in the course of the debate. Ueno criticizes Tosaka and other materialist theorists because they recognize the special qualities of artistic cognition *in word only*—for them all cognition falls into the realm of science. He throws out the example of a rose, which possesses neither beauty nor ugliness in and of itself. This objective existence is the object of scientific cognition. In contrast, artistic cognition involves feelings and emotions; the object here is the combination of actuality and its meeting with the artist's subjectivity. "The object of cognition for art is the thing *[mono]* born from the meeting of objective reality and human feeling and psychology, that is, the thing called human, psychological, social actual existence."[33] Ueno calls for theorists to separate art and science and to recognize the irreconcilable differences between the two.

This prompted responses from a number of Yuiken writers. In an article titled "Geijutsu no Shajitsu ni Tsuite" (On the realism of art), Amakasu Iwayuki elaborated the mutual dependence of art and science, suggesting that art that describes its object directly is uninteresting.[34] Amakasu's argument was that art must reach deep inside the object to grasp its very life, and in this sense it may circumvent the issue of science. However, if the true aim of art is arriving at life in reality, then it ultimately merges with science and is dependent upon it. In a *Gakugei* roundtable devoted to the issue, Tosaka weighed in on the debate, arguing that when one critically analyzes a phenomenon, one finds something else there; science holds this kind of explanatory power. Art requires technique and typicality

to describe phenomena, but representation does not end with this kind of conventionalization; for Tosaka, this is only where scientific explanation begins. Elsewhere, Tosaka expressed what he thought of Ueno's epistemology of art in more direct terms. In a short item for Yuiken's newsletter, Tosaka sharply criticizes Ueno for completely misunderstanding his writing:

> My actual theory is this. It is not that art gives "thought" and "cognition" flesh and blood, concretizing it, or in other words, it is not that it is "given form" only later and then becomes artistic cognition or artistic thought. The object itself, grasped as form from the start, is initially artistic *cognition* and artistic *thought*. This is my thought. The various ways of thinking that argue *representation* is separate from cognition—or the area of epistemology that thinks cognition is possible sans representation—that kind of epistemology is, from my design, most surely a nonsensical one.[35]

This demand to link representation and cognition from the start is advanced film theory that prefigures post-1968 ideology theories drawing on Althusser, which refocused political attack on the totality of film form rather than simple narrative content. At the same time, Tosaka skirts a mechanistic historical materialism in other parts of these essays, an orientation that draws him to the documentary: it more than any other medium seems to promise a new mode of human cognition because of that indexical link to the world. In the end, Tosaka gives us little sense of the direction he would have taken with these ideas about cinema, although he provides some hints in the conclusion of his last article in *Eiga Sōzō*. After describing the material function of cinema and its direct connection to social factors such as *fūzoku*, Tosaka turns our attention to a new perspective, the necessity of "abstraction" as a form of cognition. Here again he shows his resolve to dissolve the opposition between art and science, the popular conception of which poses science as abstract and art as sensual and concrete. Tosaka asserts that abstraction is a fundamental operation of cognition; therefore,

> art itself is the most abstract. Without it style in art would be meaningless. Painting would never have come into existence. However, variations in abstraction lie in the differences between science and art—differences among the various genres of art. . . . This is not simply the necessity of describing differences in the arts. This is because the foundation of the operation of abstraction is in the cognition faculty, the cognition function. Cinema as cognition faculty and function (not necessarily "cinema" as a cultural style) must have a specific abstraction. This is the medium through which cinema creates relationships with other cognition methods.[36]

At the end of this passage, Tosaka finishes the essay with a tantalizingly abrupt, "I'll discuss this another day." But he never had the chance. In

November 1938, the main members of Yuiken were arrested and imprisoned. Tosaka spent most of 1938 to 1945 in prison, where he died of malnutrition and disease only months before the surrender. Of course, the entire film epistemology debate in *Gakugei* ground to a halt with the arrests, leaving Ishihara the last word in a response to articles by Ueno and Amakasu.[37]

Ultimately, the debate was about the question of where one locates the struggle over meaning. Ueno points to the figure of the filmmaker. He began his film career in Prokino, where he served as one of the main leaders toward the end. One can feel his frustration over the demise of Prokino in his *Eiga Sōzō* article on amateur film, where he writes, "I myself once made small-gauge films."[38] After the dissolution of Prokino, Ueno moved into film production, and this is the perspective he brought to his reading of Tosaka. He privileged the role and responsibility of the film artist, who, he argued, should maintain a measure of control over the representation of the world through film.[39]

The degree to which this emphasis on artistic genius should be perceived as an apostasy from his earlier activism is difficult to judge. In contrast, Tosaka's theory had far-reaching implications, even if it ultimately failed to please. It is as if the state's firm grip on discourse forced Tosaka toward valorizing a kind of objectivism inside the documentary image that could exceed the reach of the hard style's oppressive conventions. Tosaka's theory strove to create critical tools for analyzing how cinema was created by artists and apprehended by spectators. In this sense, it is ultimately a theory of reception in an age when all representation should be approached critically, suspiciously. This is precisely why Tosaka framed his discussion in terms of the problematic phenomenon of *bunka eiga,* which had become inseparable from national cultural policy.

Nakai Masakazu: The Cut of the Committee

In one of the last articles published in the film epistemology debate, a new writer entered the discussion with a prescient observation informed by another body of theory. Honma Yui'ichi located the problem in the idea of the "camera eye," a trope other writers had also invoked.[40] Because this camera eye can analyze the reality that people recognize as everyday, it can become a "weapon" of cognition, helping spectators strive for an understanding of the world that deepens cognition. However, Honma warned that this cannot be done through the camera eye alone, and one must be wary about feeling at ease with cinema's unique *jisshasei.* The key problem

is the "filmmaker's eye" that initially faces profilmic reality. Honma pointed to the mediating role of the filmmaker between cognition and cinema.

Honma intervened in the Yuiken film epistemology debate by drawing on the complex film theory of Nakai Masakazu. Nakai also studied in Nishida's Kyoto Group but largely avoided the traps of Nishida's philosophy by throwing himself into modernist aesthetics, Marxism, and eventually Popular Front activism. His theoretical writings are pleasurable to read as well, and filmmakers such as Hani Susumu, Ogawa Shinsuke, and Yoshida Yoshishige claim to have found inspiration in Nakai's work. More recently, Nakai has provided Ueno Toshiya a route to British cultural studies, as well as a theoretical rubric for thinking through the impact of new technologies on aesthetics.[41] Nakai's work lends itself to consideration of digital art because Nakai always couched his aesthetics in the context of massive social changes throughout history. This is one reason he is often compared to Walter Benjamin—in fact, his "Art and Its Tendencies in a Time of Intellectual Crisis" (Shisōteki kiki ni okeru geijutsu narabi ni sono dōkō) and Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" were both published in 1936. However, Nakai is rarely as straightforward as Benjamin; one must read many of his essays ranging over the same territory in order to map out his basic intellectual project.[42]

In short, Nakai imagined a new art for a new age, and the aesthetic he preferred was invariably modernist and leaned on the photorealistic qualities of new art technologies. The magazines he led—*Bi-Hihyō* (Beauty/criticism), followed by *Sekai Bunka* (World culture)—were filled with introductions to Le Corbusier, Vertov, Balasz, and Moholy-Nagy. Regular contributors included such familiar names as Shimizu Hikaru and Kanō Ryūichi. They considered every form of art, even envisioning an avant-garde television.[43] However, they placed cinema in a privileged position. It was the ultimate art for its era, for the way it became embedded in capitalism, for its collaborative nature, and, as Nakai would put it, for the way lens and film enabled "the re-creation of the 'transcendent singularity' of history, a doubling of a combined present in history that passionately provokes people's historical consciousness."[44]

As Imamura Taihei suggests, Nakai Masakazu demonstrated how the camera seems to "weigh" our relationship to the filmed object from history.[45] It does this frame by frame, in what amounts to a mathematical system. The dark theater binds spectators to this object through light and sound waves. For Nakai this is the basis of the new beauty of the modern era and a new principle for art. It is no fiction. Nakai's *kikai no bi,* or machine beauty, was decidedly documentary. The redoubling of time and the new "graphic space" of the cinema involved a demand to represent the

world and a claim that cinema is uniquely disposed to do so. For Nakai, too much cinema amounted to nothing but "pale theater."[46] In this highly capitalized system, spectators are only a mass exploited for profit by capital, bound to this by film criticism and journalism. Nakai challenged people to look for a new logic of artistic praxis with the ability to generate new critical powers. To this end, he focused on the particularity of cinema's *kontinuitii,* or continuity.

This loan word meant a number of things in 1930s Japan. It was a synonym for *film script,* but it also referred to the striking sense of continuous time constructed in the cinema. When considered at a theoretical level, the orientation inevitably pointed back toward the Soviets. Nakai and his *Bi-Hihyō dōjin* combined all the senses of *kontinuitii* in an unusual form of close textual analysis. Their starting point was, naturally, their experience watching the few Soviet films that survived censorship. These included *Mother, New Earth, Storm over Asia, Old and New, Turksib,* and *Spring*. Western readers will be surprised to learn that the last two of these were by far the most influential films, despite their relatively obscure place in the Western canon. This could be because *Turksib* and *Spring* emerged from censorship relatively unscathed. It is also interesting that the group members were enamored of the writings of Vertov as opposed to Pudovkin and Eisenstein, all of whom were known through translations into German and Japanese.

The group's relationship to this cinema is summed up in a remarkable 1931 essay by Nakai titled, "'Haru' no Kontinuitii" (The continuity of *Spring*).[47] *Spring* was directed by Mikhail Kaufman, Vertov's brother and collaborator. Kaufman served as cinematographer for much of *Kino Pravda*. He also shot Vertov's masterpiece, *The Man with the Movie Camera,* to which Nakai had no access (one wonders if *Spring* was a cathartic substitute). When *Spring* was shown in Japan at the end of 1930, Nakai and his friends saw it repeatedly and used it to argue over the meaning and import of Vertov's film theory. Nakai finally went to the theater with a stopwatch and measured the length of each and every shot. He used this information to produce a curious chart, dense with numbers and letters and so long that it spills over onto a second page. In this way, Nakai added this graphic representation of cinematic time as a new meaning for "continuity." Using this chart as a guide, he studied the structure and montage of Kaufman's film, noting the effects of rhythmic editing. The chart represented the entire film at a single glance, summing it up like a mathematical equation.

This was not the only time a film underwent such close textual analysis. *Turksib* received as impressive a continuity in the inaugural (June 1931)

issue of *Eiga Kagaku Geijutsu* (Film science art), along with articles about the film by Bela Balasz and Kinugasa Teinosuke. The second issue in August was devoted to Eisenstein's *Old and New* and had the same graphic style of continuity. In a sense, Nakai and his colleagues were attempting to surmount the film critic's age-old problem: How does one describe on paper an object that contains moving images and sound? Their solution emphasizes the temporal dimension of cinema, its complex qualities of rhythm and continuity. It is a conception of documentary that celebrates the edit and not the shot—quite in opposition to the orientation implicit in Tosaka's epistemology of cinema.

This machine beauty is more than just a fashion, although it is deeply engaged with contemporary art movements such as dadaism, constructivism, and futurism, and obviously owes much to Vertov. The new aesthetic that Nakai celebrated was the effect of a paradigm shift that changed not just artistic sensibility but daily life itself. This is why, unlike Tosaka's writings, Nakai's theory speaks to us in the present-day environment of fax machines, the Internet, virtual reality, and ubiquitous computer technology. Nakai's work has an optimistic freshness not unlike the "spring" Nakai and his friends peered at in Kaufman's film.

In order to orient himself, Nakai sketched out the broadest shifts in aesthetic values, from the Greeks' division of techné and mimesis to the romantic school. In the latter, skill is replaced by an overvaluation of artistic genius, and copy/imitation is superseded by a valorization of individual creativity. The romantic era made art an independent sphere, and Nakai pointed to the dangers of selfishness and individualism it seemed to inspire. However, in the modern era, genius gave way to the skill of the technician, originality to imitation. Nakai pointed to Le Corbusier as, in some sense, a return to the classical ways of thinking, and he placed documentary at the apotheosis of the present era's aesthetic values:

> Through the group it becomes possible for the record preservation of light, word, and sound through the technologies of lens, film, and vacuum tubes. In the end, the realism function up to today arrives at an extremely huge leap forward. In this sense, the realism of the group organization has a clear distinction from the sphere of naturalism and the realists. . . . Documentation presents the best results in its editing-by-committee, the correctness of all reports by massed technicians as opposed to that of so-called artistic specialists. The future of what is called documentary in the motion pictures is meaningful only as this kind of group structure, and it is a vast future. . . . The foundation of this *sense of actuality* preserves the dialectical system produced not by ourselves but by the objective cosmos. This sense of touch that wrests away the entirety of reality must be immanent here, as the enormous shadow of that

course. The eternal chance meeting of time is the feeling of that shadow casting to the limitless corners of the earth's crust.[48]

The new world that Nakai celebrated had much to do with *shūdansei,* the "groupness" Imamura was so fascinated by and that he undoubtedly learned from Nakai. At the most vulgar level, this could be read as a code word for socialism, used to evade the reprisals of censors. However, Nakai made it the key to his aesthetics while allowing it a slipperiness that defies easy translation. *Shūdansei* received its most elaborate treatment with Nakai's trope of the "committee." Underlying the demise of the romantics was capitalism, which upset the notion of beauty and art as the product of human genius. With the industrialization of modern societies comes a social system firmly bound by capital. Individuals—and the philosophical systems buttressing individuality—are absorbed by new organizations such as schools, the military, businesses, film studios, and bureaucracies of one sort or another. These organizations and their committees garner considerable power as they suspend individuals in new networks of relationships. As people organized into masses, machines came to mediate these relationships. Finally, because cinema owes its existence to the invention of novel machinery, and because it is a phenomenon so intimately linked to the capitalism of the modern era, Nakai saw it as negating the old aesthetic paradigm and linking society to its future—a future that Nakai perceived to be very much up for grabs, despite the apparent perils of fascism.

Because cinema's function is ultimately to represent social reality, its most critical form is the documentary. Nakai's conception of documentary emphasized the edit over the image and what it contains. Nakai saw the image of the historical world as an object of collation, and the creative process this involves can also be understood as a montage of roles. This is what he meant by "editing-by-committee." The problem is that in the modern era, the specialization that capital depends upon leads only to technocratic organizations. However, Nakai used the cinema to indicate progressive possibilities for the *iinkai*. It promises to be an organizational space where people congregate and coalesce into a group subject.

His most interesting articles developing this line of thinking appeared in the June and July 1932 issues of *Kōga*. This *dōjinshi* was dedicated to experimental photography and its theorization. Its name was a recently coined neologism combining the Chinese characters for light *(kō/hikari)* and picture *(ga),* playing off the words *kaiga* (painting) and *eiga* (cinema). Nakai, in turn, plays with the word *kōga* in his contributions titled "Kabe" (Wall) and "Utsusu" (Reflect/project). The wall of his first article refers to the medium of image production in the Middle Ages, an image that also

acted as a support structure for the architecture it decorated and, by extension, the social body it enclosed. The medial shift from walls to canvas gave art a new independent existence, but it was only a matter of time before its portability was exploited by capitalism and the rise of individualism. Now in the modern age, the individual sinks back into the group, and Nakai replaces that old wall with the window metaphor so familiar to film theorists. Nakai brings a new twist to it by pointing out that the window still acts as an architectural support, but the "glass wall" sends people's attention out to the historical world. That window, thanks to the invention of the lens and film, is the *kōga,* the picture of light decorating today's wall.

Having established the place of the image, Nakai turns to montage in the second article, "Utsusu." He notes the multiple meanings of this word in Japanese, leaving the title in hiragana so that he can condense all its meanings in a neat bundle of signification: to reproduce, to imitate, to project, to reflect, to remove, to transfer, to infect, to film, to transcribe, to duplicate, to reproduce, to trace, to describe, to picture, to photograph. The slipping and sliding referent for *utsusu* raises all the perennial problematics of the documentary. Nakai singles out the split between transitive and intransitive senses of the word, noting that they indicate a bifurcated directionality—a system that reflects or records light as opposed to one that throws light. He stresses the active side in the paradigmatic shifts from wall to canvas to *kōga*. In this movement montage is the key. Montage is the means by which one moves from a passive *utsusu* to actively "throwing the gaze" of the group subject. Here montage becomes far more than the collation and organization of information because the linkages from shot to shot ultimately surpass the montage of the committee. The creation of meaning is ultimately handed to the spectating group. Nakai's kino eye is the combined (and critical) subjectivities of cameraman, editor, and spectators.

In the postwar period, Nakai developed this idea with a linguistic analogy, always a favorite tactic of film theorists: film, unlike language, has no copula. It has no *de aru* or *de nai,* and thus montage is ultimately the domain of the spectators—territory beyond the regulation of producers. Spectators were the agents responsible for the meaning-producing conjoining of images. This was a postwar innovation that commentators often use ahistorically to summarize Nakai's aesthetics. However, the origins of this thread of thought can be seen in his 1930s writings. Indeed, these theories were intimately tied to the situation that artists and creative intellectuals found themselves in during the crescendo of militarism. In an age when the documentary was serving the invasion of China and the self-representation

of the right, Nakai optimistically placed his faith in the spectator to create the film's meaning.

Of course, he thought this required a certain kind of aesthetic, and, like Prokino, he exploited the amateur film to bring theory into practice. Judging from the traces he left behind, his films are among the most intriguing documentaries of the prewar period. The two films Nakai worked most closely on were *Poem of the Sea* (Umi no shi; 1932) and *Ten-Minute Meditation* (Juppunkan no shisaku; 1932).[49] These began as a single project initiated by violinist Kishi Tatsushi (Kan) who wanted to shoot an avant-garde film on Horyūji Temple in 1931. He broached the idea with Murakami Toshio of Asahi's Osaka Planning Department (who shot amateur films and owned the equipment), Naitō Kojirō (a composer who was experimenting with "color music"), Tsujibe Masatarō, and Nakai. They teamed up with Andō Haruzō, who was conducting early research into color film technologies, and this is partly where their project's significance lies: this was to be Japan's first color film. Beginning with test shoots around the outside of the temple using a borrowed Bell & Howell 16mm camera, and then at Kishi's home in Ashiya, their production was confronted with a major obstacle when two of the three bureaucracies controlling the temple refused to grant them permission to shoot inside.

In the end, they photographed only the *Poem of the Sea* section. Tsujibe's script was a pure film, structured by the natural cycle of morning/noon/night. Because Andō aspired to produce an easily understood three-part narrative, the group ended up compromising, producing a mix of documentary and fictional narration far different from what they had originally planned. After shooting for ten days in Shikoku, they cut the film using rhythmic editing and added seasonal markers that were reminiscent of haiku. Andō's color system reportedly looked as brilliant as multi-strip Technicolor. They ended up with a forty-five-minute film with German subtitles.

They also still had outtakes from their experiments outside of Horyūji, so Nakai compiled them into a one-reel, part-color short titled *Ten-Minute Meditation*. This was the philosopher's dedicated attempt to put theory into action. The filmmakers gathered the material, some of which was shot with a fish-eye lens, into a free association of imagistic thoughts. This was precisely the period when Nakai was writing "The Continuity of *Spring*."

The films had their premieres in Kyoto and Osaka in October 1932, and a report in an Osaka newspaper heralded "the birth of an aesthetics cinema." The films were even shown to Hirohito as examples of the new

color technology, and Kishi took the prints with him on his next European tour. After screening the films for Balasz and the European avant-garde community, Kishi suddenly died. No one knows what happened to the films.

We can, at least, find a hint concerning what Nakai was attempting in these films by looking at *First Anniversary of "Saturday"* ("Doyōbi" no isshūnen kinenbi; 1937), the only extant film that we know with any confidence Nakai collaborated on. On the surface, it is an unassuming home movie of a party; however, it is also a rich example of what Nakai meant by "cinema-by-*iinkai*." The Saturday of the title refers to a newspaper edited by Nakai and Kyoto lawyer Nose Katsuo. It grew out of an agitprop newsletter called *Kyoto Sutajio Tsūshin* (Kyoto studio news), which was published by Shochiku star Saitō Raitarō and Kanō Ryūichi, who was then in the studio's planning department, having left Kyoto University's Architecture Department.[50] Their newsletter transformed into *Doyōbi* in July 1936, a year after the 26 February coup d'état and the banning of May Day celebrations. Conceived as a weapon of the Popular Front against fascism, the name was inspired by France's *Vendredi* (Friday). However, whereas *Vendredi* had the feel of intellectuals enlightening the mass of readers, *Doyōbi* aspired to be a "newspaper written by its readers" under the leadership of Nakai and Nose. The editors' predilection for the cinema comes out strong in its pages. They devoted at least a full page of each issue to film news, criticism, and gossip, and they sneaked more into other sections of the paper. Shimizu Hikaru was in charge of the film section, which included early criticism by the young Yodogawa Nagaharu. Readers even complained there were too many articles on the movies.[51]

Doyōbi was an attempt to think of the newspaper as the product of a committee in the age of the news media's collaboration with what they perceived as an escalating fascism. One could say the film that records the newspaper's first anniversary was part of the committee work. It survives among the prints of Nose, who threw himself into the production of experimental films and homemade books of photographs.[52] This seven-minute film was the product of a collaboration among Nakai, Nose, and other *dōjin* from *Doyōbi, Bi-Hihyō,* and *Sekai Bunka,* including Saito, Kyoto University's Nagahiro Toshio, and Niimura Takeshi. It opens with pans over issues of *Doyōbi* scattered on the floor. An intertitle announces that a "happy day arrives for seventy-odd friends." The film then cuts to a boat on nearby Lake Biwa, where a lively party is under way. Men, women, and children chat and drink under a French tricolor emblazoned with the word *Doyōbi.* We see faces in canted angles and panning in fits and starts (thanks to in-camera editing, a kind of montage of the shutter). The drink obvious-

ly taking effect, the *Doyōbi* committee starts dancing around the deck, women and men, men and men, all drunk and happy.

In the second half of the film, many of the same people are picnicking in a park. On the grass sits a windup phonograph, presumably the same one used to play music at the screenings. Nose's young son, Kyō, spun the American jazz 78s when the films were shown around Kyoto (he would go on to become a professional documentary filmmaker when he grew up). Back at that picnic in the summer of 1937, the *Doyōbi iinkai* was folk dancing in the park.

This is one of the most cheerful, optimistic documentaries of the so-called dark valley of the Fifteen-Year War. Of all of these films, it is closest to the home movie in form, but it is far more than a simple personal record. It is a commemoration of an important event. Faces parade before the lens during the dancing, and as in all dance, the human body is molded into graphic patterns. In this case it was the graphic space of cinema that so fascinated Nakai. These coordinated bodies are also forms overtly organized by the film frame, and their movement plays off the cutting of the montage (inside the camera and out). One senses the care the filmmakers took to note the presence of each and every person by sliding past their smiling faces. This raucous party took place a year after the 26 February failed coup d'état and just days before the Marco Polo Bridge incident set off the China War. It was also only a few months before the forty-fourth and final issue of *Doyōbi,* a run cut short by the November imprisonment of Nakai, Saitō, and Niimura. These three were followed shortly by Nose and the rest. When they nabbed Nose, they also confiscated *First Anniversary of "Saturday"* and all his other films.

Knowing that the government deemed these 8mm films dangerous enough to confiscate confirms what we already know about their intimate relationship to Nakai's film theory. These works deployed a radical aesthetic in aggressive contradiction to the hard style. In tandem with the theorization of Nakai, they articulate an approach to art and life that was at odds with the trends of the time. Luckily, Nose went to the police after the Japanese surrender and demanded the return of his films. Nakai's influence on them is evident, especially in the striking film *The Flying Virgin* (Tonde iru shojo; 1935). The title of this impressionistic short refers to the "bus girl" who takes tickets on the public buses that speed through the streets of Kyoto. The first intertitle invites the spectator in to the tune of jazz music playing in the background:[53] "Let's tap our tin lunchboxes and sing along with the bus girl!" This flying virgin, who acts like a visual refrain throughout the film, looks out at a Kyoto bustling with the energy of a modern metropolis. Crowds of people move through the alleys between

tall buildings. Nose shoots them from the neck down, emphasizing their body movements as pure pattern. The screen displays a whirling pastiche of streetcars, buses, bicycles, pedestrians, power lines, and clocks. Whimsical intertitles, all of which are superimposed over street images, weave the shots together with humorous wordplay and poetic images. The highlight is a nighttime sequence of overlapping and spinning neon lights every bit as beautiful as the ending of *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City.* This is anything but the Kyoto of the tourist film—or Japan in time of crisis, for that matter.

The more aggressively critical context for *The Flying Virgin* is Nose's *Canal* (Sōsui; 1934). The title conjures images of flowing water as well as travel and tendencies in thought. This film follows water from Lake Biwa on its long journey through a canal to the old capital of Kyoto. It is replete with water imagery, and the camera work is as fluid as the subject. Unlike the staccato editing of the other films, the editing of *Canal* results in a film that imitates the leisurely pace of the water itself. As the canal wends its way through the mountains, the camera never stops moving. Along the way, intertitles supply punctuation, mixing poetic imagery with historical notes about the construction of the canal and the innumerable bridges under which the camera slides. We learn about the incredible amount of imported, foreign cement the construction workers had to pour back in the Meiji era, "accompanied by the call of the industrialized nation." Hints that a subtle reading is called for start accumulating as the canal arrives in Kyoto. The water passes farmland, universities, temples, and finally Gion and its geisha. Nose highlights the train and the new city structures along the canal. Webs of wiring for electricity and telephones stretch across the sky, as do massive iron girders. The canal transports spectators through the history of Japan's industrialization, providing a new perspective on the images of women washing long bolts of cloth in the canal's flow. The latter is a typical tourist shot of a centuries-old tradition, but Nose self-consciously meditates on his own aestheticization of the women and tradition in the intertitles:

> The dyed cloth is beautiful, but . . .
> The work to dye is still work.

The intertitles lead to the film's quiet climax. The lovely image of these women immersing their cloth in the waters of the canal hides the struggle for work that is ultimately the "ideal of the industrial nation." On the same waters that structure the cinematic tour "float their sweat, bones and tears," and the canal flows on and on. The canal's geography,

its journey from Lake Biwa to Kyoto, also has a temporal dimension, slowly drifting through Japanese history from the ancients to the modernization of Meiji to the modern old capital. It plays with the thrill of the modern without giving in completely to its seductive speed.

The last image of this thoughtful film is a whirlpool of garbage, the flotsam spinning at a leisurely pace. This dystopic image is the first time the steady flow of the film—its lateral movement and its stream of edits—ceases. It recalls the last lines of "The Continuity of *Spring*," where Nakai reflects on the vision of society presented on the movie screens of 1930s Japan: "Our spring is still slight. Cold, dried up, everything is frozen over. Spring is slumbering within that sky."[54]

[6] *Kamei Fumio: Editing under Pressure*

> *Even now I remember the mood as all the reels unspooled; rather than exuberant battles, I felt as if I touched the quiet souls of soldiers who are facing death, wearing shoes with holes, and marching as if asleep. It made my heart freeze.*
> :: Tanaka Jun'ichirō, *Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi*, vol. 3, 1980

> *Even though these two films are entitled* Nanking *and* Shanghai, *they do not record the cities themselves. Rather, they are films that search out the traces of the hard fighting of the imperial troops in two Chinese cities and grasp the present conditions with a heart that prays for patriotic feelings. . . . Even without an understanding of China, they knew precisely what kind of agony the imperial troops suffered in the two cities. Still again, in their hearts their emotions as Japanese naturally swelled and swelled. . . . Between the filmmakers and spectators, there naturally comes to be a secret understanding without speaking. And then, these two films became masterpieces of documentary in today's national milieu.*
> :: Sawamura Tsutomu, *Gendai Eigaron*, 13 December 1941

The two epigraphs above represent radically different readings of the same director's work. Nearly all of Kamei Fumio's films from the war era have this strange quality. They certainly look like all the flag-waving propaganda documentaries of the day, but at the same time they leave the spectator with a distinctly different aftertaste. Furthermore, while they share the creative qualities of films like *Snow Country* and *Villages without Doctors*, Kamei takes the innovations of such films a step further. In his own country he is appropriately considered the central figure in the history of Japanese documentary. His *Fighting Soldiers* regularly appears on lists of the most important Japanese films. After the war, he made powerful documen-

taries about the aftereffects of the atomic bombings and the problems surrounding the U.S. military bases in Japan. However, Kamei has received scant exposure elsewhere. A measure of this situation is the cinema centenary catalog produced for the Tokyo International Film Festival by Hasumi Shigehiko and Yamane Sadao. They asked more than a hundred foreign filmmakers, film scholars, and film programmers what they perceived to be the most important film in one hundred years of Japanese cinema; the results were predictably along the lines of the Ozu/Mizoguchi/Kurosawa triumvirate, with the exception of Andrei Sakurov's choice: *Fighting Soldiers.* One reason Kamei has been ignored is almost certainly Anderson and Richie's bruising criticism of his work in *The Japanese Film,* basically for no reason other than his leftist perspective. Other reasons include the general neglect of non-Western documentary and the difficulty of appreciating Kamei's work out of context; if one has no understanding of the substance of the wartime hard style, one has no way to measure Kamei's spectacular innovation. In any case, whereas Iwasaki Akira provides the most daring example of airing the hidden discontent in wartime film criticism, his counterpart in production is Kamei Fumio.

Born in Fukushima prefecture in 1908, Kamei may have inherited his political obstinacy from his father, who sold rice and participated in the Freedom and People's Rights Movement.[1] His family was devoutly Catholic, and they were particularly kind to their poorer customers, so during the rice riots of the Taisho era their shop was left alone. The attitudes of his family and his early experience of poverty heightened Kamei's awareness of social problems, and he found himself attracted to the writings of Marx and Lenin while majoring in sociology and painting at Bunka Gakuin. In 1928, he left school to learn painting in the Soviet Union. This was unusual; most young visitors to the USSR smuggled themselves in rather than going through official channels. Kamei had previously had little interest in film, but after seeing the great Soviet films of the period, he immediately opted for a change of course and studied cinema at the film school in Leningrad. This unusual entry into the film world gave Kamei a particular orientation toward cinema—one that put montage at cinema's foundation. It was in Leningrad that Kamei was introduced to the centrality of editing and its political implications; he once said that were it not for editing, filmmaking would not have interested him.[2]

It was precisely through his command of image and sound amalgamation that he undermined the codes of the hardened filmic style with a specificity and brilliance unmatched by his colleagues. In comparison, Nakai and Nose turned away from the hard style through a vertiginous modernism, in both theory and practice. Because this was clearly a dangerous

strategy, they could accomplish it only within the amateur film world. Most mainstream filmmakers with less-than-cooperative attitudes were like Atsugi and Kyōgoku, who ignored requests by supervisors to include the tropes of the public style in *Record of a Nursery* and simply purged the war from their films. In contrast, Kamei virtually dissected the hard style in *Fighting Soldiers* while simultaneously producing it.

Kamei's filmmaking career actually began in the editing room. He returned to Japan in 1931 because he had tuberculosis, and his mother nursed him back to health at the TB sanatorium she ran. Having left a wife and child back in the Soviet Union, he attempted to return, only to be denied an exit visa by the Japanese government. This would be the first of many times Kamei found himself a victim of the state. Trapped in his own country, he entered PCL through the introduction of a friend and began working on public relations films. His first major job was on postproduction for *Through the Angry Waves* in 1936, the year PCL turned into Toho Studio. Cinematographer Shirai Shigeru had accompanied the warship *Ashigaru* to a coronation ceremony in England, and then to a port of call in Germany, which was Japan's new ally. Not surprisingly, much of the film follows the disciplined daily routine of the sailors. Kamei took Shirai's footage and conformed it to the conventions of the exotic propaganda films of Yokohama Cinema such as *Lifeline of the Sea*. He also worked on the editing of *Shina jihen* (China Incident; 1937), a compilation film that cannibalized newsreel footage to justify the invasion of China. These were important transitional films for the move away from *henshū eiga,* but they were no different from every other propaganda film in the theaters. With his next project, *Shanghai,* Kamei came into his own.

Shanghai was part of the Toho city trilogy, along with Akimoto Takeshi's *Nanking* and Kamei's *Peking*. The latter two, lost for many years, have recently been rediscovered; their differences are instructive.[3] *Shanghai* started with meetings at Toho's *bunka eiga* section, where section chief (and former Prokino member) Matsuzaki Keiji and his staff discussed what kind of film they wanted to produce. They sent cinematographer Miki Shigeru and a sound recordist to China. However, when the first batch of rushes arrived from China, the staff members were dumbfounded. The film they had agreed to make was something like "not the front lines, but the Shanghai that had already become the rear guard, with the sound of shelling receding daily—the bright Shanghai that had entered a period of construction."[4] However, the footage that Miki sent back to Japan was dark and depressing. No one else wanted to touch it, but Kamei quickly volunteered. This would truly be a challenging edit. He started cutting and added

in other footage as it arrived. Miki helped with the editing upon his return from China, and after many rough cuts they produced their finished film.

Shanghai looks like any other militarist film of the day, although its scale matches the event it set out to portray. In the introduction, Shanghai's spectacular skyline comes into view from the bow of a Japanese warship. The film starts at the busy Bund, where life seems to bustle as if nothing unusual has happened, but then it enters the broken back streets and finally arrives at the battlefields surrounding the city. Animated maps typical of the war documentary establish the lay of the land, and various soldiers describe the "Incident." Sync-sound interviews with POWs, Chinese refugees, Japanese schoolchildren, and a French relief worker establish the kindness of the Japanese military. The voice-over narration is basically like that found in any other propaganda film. There is, however, a decisive difference.

Miki and Kamei's *Shanghai* contains many of the same images (and even individual people) as *Civilian Victims of Japanese Brutality,* the Magee/Fitch amateur film on Nanking discussed earlier. Outside of *Shanghai*'s vastly superior cinematography, the most decisive difference between the two films is the amateur film's images of painful wounds and corpses. However, this is not to say that such violence is entirely absent from *Shanghai*. Kamei and Miki point to it everywhere, in every lonely grave marker and in the heads missing from the helmets that litter the battlefields. Miki frames the massive destruction in the wake of the battles through the holes blasted in buildings. Shelled-out houses line long, empty streets; other areas surge with refugees. This might be the film Iwasaki describes in his *Bungei Shunjū* article "Jihen to Nyūsu Eiga" (Incident and news film); that article and the film should be seen as companion pieces. The filmmakers gesture to the war "out there" by photographing military press conferences—simultaneously pointing to the mediation of information from the front—and by showing groups of soldiers returning from or departing for the fighting. These scenes are punctuated by cheerful interviews with soldiers, refugees, POWs, and Japanese children on the one hand and the silent stakes of Japanese graves on the other.

In this respect, this retrospective approach is a significant difference between *Shanghai* and the second installment of the Toho city trilogy, *Nanking*. Shot by Shirai Shigeru with editing by Akimoto Takeshi, *Nanking* shows the battle that led to the fall of the city. However, the camera remains far from the actual fighting, and many of the scenes appear to have been staged. *Nanking* shows the chaos of refugees around the Red Cross safety zones and small efforts of kindness by Japanese soldiers in offering medical treatment, food, and the stray cigarette. Its climax covers the formal

parade into the city along with its speeches. One unusual scene shows the funeral services for Japanese casualties, but the brutal violence of the occupation is completely elided. The only other evidence of warfare in *Nanking* is the rubble and ephemera of battle. This film was lost for more than five decades, inspiring much curiosity over its approach to such a controversial subject. When it finally surfaced, it proved to be nothing but an extended version of the newsreels of the day.

In contrast, *Shanghai* is unmistakably darker and more ominous. Kamei cleverly deploys the tropes of the hard style only to subvert their politics. For example, one of the most powerful scenes shows a military parade through the streets of Shanghai. Obligatory crowds line the street, waving Japanese flags. However, Kamei intercuts between long shots of the parade and a closer view photographed from one of the trucks; the camera passes by a seemingly endless line of faces, all looking very sad and worried (Figure 15).

In scenes like these, which are admittedly few, Kamei solicits identification with the position of the new other being brought into the nation. He brings this principle to a new level in *Peking,* one of the most impressive documentaries in Japanese film. Interestingly, it has been virtually ignored by critics and historians. In fact, so little has been written about it that it is unclear if Kamei accompanied the crew to the mainland. One reason for this appears to be that the print disappeared during the war. In contrast, *Shanghai* had a postwar life that allowed writers access to it; thus in his book on the China War, Satō Tadao devotes pages of analysis to *Shanghai* but dispenses with *Peking* in a couple of sentences.[5] Although *Nanking* was also missing for half a century, its subject matter invariably drew attention. However, this still does not explain why so few critics of the 1930s paid attention to *Peking* while the two other films received extensive praise. This suggests another reason: the other two films are basically propaganda films, but contemporary critics had no idea what to make of *Peking's* experimen-



Figure 15. Worried faces welcoming Japanese troops in *Shanghai.*

tal quality. It didn't fit the familiar rubric for documentary. Its style is quite unlike that of any other nonfiction film of the time.[6] Only Kamei Fumio could have imagined such a documentary at such an early date. Of the films in the Toho city trilogy, *Peking* is far and away the best.

The striking thing about *Peking* is its enunciative position. Most Japanese films of the time smother the differences between Japanese and their Asian neighbors with the trappings of Japanese signage. In these films, people from all over Asia cloak themselves in Japanese uniforms, songs, language, and the rituals of Japanese religion. Through this kind of spectacular signification, the films show Asians taking their place in that spectral structure underlying the hard style. We have already seen exceptions to this rule. There were the strongly ethnographic films of Mantetsu, but they were for the most part made before the China Incident. There were the Man'ei documentaries for Chinese audiences, but those films were highly pedagogical. Kamei's *Peking* is an artful attempt to create a film from the place of the other.

It begins with monumental photography of ancient buildings. The cinematography highlights the massive proportions of the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, and other great architectural features of the city. No tourists distract from these huge relics of the past. Their squares are empty and quiet. With orchestral music that borrows from Chinese melodies, the sequence strongly emphasizes the long, powerful history of the city. Suddenly, the camera enters the city spaces around the monuments, which are teeming with human activity. It shows a busy market, street cafés, people rushing through the narrow streets. It follows a noisy wedding procession, with a herd of pigs not far behind. They surround the camera and turn the frame into a sea of bristling pig skin. One sequence shows all the unusual signs hanging outside the shops. Another visits a magic show, then focuses on some street acrobats. The film progresses from empty monuments to crowded streets, from ancient history to the present day, from quiet traces of ancestors to a city bursting with vitality—life in the midst of a war kept to a barely visible margin.

Traces of that faraway conflict mark the film here and there, but they are remarkably restrained. They create little pressure. There is the inevitable exercise scene, but it is very short. Virtually the only intrusion of the war itself takes the form of a radio broadcast in Chinese. Subtitles with a Japanese translation fill the screen, superimposed over the Chinese faces of passersby who have stopped in the middle of the street to listen:

> Last night, Chiang Kai-shek's defeated soldiers collapsed at the opening to the West of the Yangtze River. For the general it is a last resort at the hour of

> death. As a result, rather than repelling the Japanese military's attack, tens of millions of good citizens fall into the jaws of death. Men and beasts instantly drink in a muddy river—these are extremely gruesome circumstances. That is the news.

The news itself, as well as its manner of reportage, mitigates its propaganda value for Japan. More than anything, the report functions as an ominous threat to the life on the streets. The people walking those alleys constantly remind us of our intrusion. The screen is filled with candid photography, but the objectifying gaze of the camera is constantly interrupted by people looking back. A group of girls strolling across a park glance in our direction and the sound track captures their comment, "Isn't that a Japanese cameraman?" At a street restaurant, the camera settles on an old man eating. Suddenly, he looks up from his bowl and ferociously waves the cinematographer away (Figure 16). In both instances, the individuals' voices are given extra weight by the Japanese subtitles.



Figure 16. *Peking*: "Don't shoot me!"

The power of these scenes is highly reliant on sound. In fact, *Peking* represents, along with *Listen to Britain* (1942), the most creative use of documentary sound up until that time. When the film leaves the monuments for the streets, the nondiegetic music gives way to a chorus of street sounds recorded in sync with the camera. At first we hear no more than a chaotic tapestry of rich, foreign noise, but soon Kamei starts foregrounding the sound track. One lengthy scene presents nothing but street peddlers walking back and forth before the camera, each with a different noisemaker—a drum, a gourd, a whistle, a bell—and each calling out his wares. Later, when the filmmakers politely interview an old school principal, a crew member shows him the microphone, telling him, "While photographing your countenance, they will record your voice with this ball."

In a 1938 article in *Eiga Hyōron,* Kamei called *Shanghai* his "tragedy" and *Peking* his "love story."[7] It would have been more appropriate to call it his love song, as Kamei seduces spectators through their sense of hearing (a relatively new experience in the movie theater). At the climax of this scene of aural tourism, a Chinese woman ties whistles, some of which play up to five notes, to the backs of pigeons. She releases one of the birds into the sky, where it joins its flock, along with a squadron of Japanese planes flying off to the front. The narrator calls attention to the "angels of East Asian peace" flying into the sunset, but the sounds of the planes are drowned out by the whimsical and wondrous chorus of whistles coming from the mass of pigeons swooping over the city. The ambiguous relationship between the warplanes and the whistling pigeons invites contemplation; this scene has none of the pedagogical clarity of the typical war documentary.

Although he could have been talking about *Peking,* Akimoto Takeshi posed the difference between foreign and Japanese documentary styles as a matter of editing, Kamei's being the ideal example: "The editing of *Shanghai* was utterly surprising. . . . In American editing 2 + 2 = 4 is clearly explained right to the end, but Kamei stops explaining at 2 + 2 and makes the spectators themselves create the answer 4 in their own minds. . . . As a result of this kind of method, the viewer receives a strong, impressively serious feeling—this is our aim."[8] In 1939, Kamei himself described his approach to editing as an "induction" of the spectator's imagination:

> The reason I included shots such as those was that I knew my audience would be looking at the film intently. This was because in those days, audiences in newsreel showings were always searching the screen for a glimpse of a loved one, a brother or a father or a friend. This made them "deep readers of the screen" or perhaps we might say of the sub-rosa meaning of the screen.[9]

This editing strategy requiring an active spectatorship did not mean a kind of mystification; for Kamei, documentary always remained in the realm of "science" in Tosaka's sense. "Mystic films are not culture films," he pronounced in a 1938 discussion, "[Mystic films] hide the truth from the people's eyes."[10] Imminent structural changes would allow Kamei to test the limits of this maxim, as the following discussion of the famous "cameraman-viewfinder (loupe) debate" shows.

The period in which Kamei rose to prominence in the documentary filmmaking world coincided with fundamental shifts in the industry's structure that led to the new role of "director." The original shift probably occurred with the *henshū eiga* of Suzuki, but that was a slow transformation. Through most of the 1930s, the typical production style involved a relatively autonomous cinematographer who would strike out into the field. Occasionally, the cinematographer was asked to shoot footage according to some kind of plan, but often he simply went out and shot what he thought was appropriate. When the cinematographer returned home with the footage, an editor would give it structure, forming it into a finished film. Kamei's films before *Peking* were produced through this method. This standard operating procedure gave Kamei a chance to hone his editing skills, but it limited his control over the sounds and images that arrived at his editing table. However, after *Shanghai* Kamei was among a new breed of directors who accompanied their cinematographers into the field, shaping their films from the beginning. Kamei's first film as a "director" was *Fighting Soldiers,* which he shot with Miki Shigeru in China in 1938. Shirai Shigeru, Kamei's cinematographer on *Inabushi* (1941) and *Kobayashi Issa* (1941), recalls being bewildered by Kamei's direction. Kamei would ask him to do things for no apparent purpose. Sometimes Kamei's approach resulted in fundamental changes in a film, as when he converted a central motif in *Kobayashi Issa* from flood damage to frost damage.[11]

At the end of the 1930s, with large-scale documentaries being produced on a regular basis and the discourse surrounding both the Film Law and Paul Rotha's *Documentary Film,* the emergence of the documentary film "director" was near completion. The growing contradictions involving differing roles and ambitions led to competition and tension between cameramen and their new bosses. These feelings burst into public view in 1940 in an infamous exchange of open letters known as the cameraman-viewfinder debate *(kameraman rūpe ronsō)*. The debarte was spurred by a roundtable that included Kamei, Akimoto, Ishimoto, Ueno, and cinematographer Tanaka Yoshiji. After discussing Rotha's impact, the filmmakers turned to the new phenomenon of the documentary director.

Kamei spoke of the importance of a director's overseeing every step in production, and ended with a rather flippant comment:

> Cameramen see things only through the viewfinder. They are like horses with blinders on. Being in charge of the camera, this is inevitable. This is why the director is necessary, in order to see the world behind and to the sides.[12]

The cinematographers in the *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* readership—most likely all the documentary cameramen in Japan—were understandably upset about being compared to dull draft animals. In the next issue, Miki Shigeru, acting as the representative for all the cinematographers, wrote "A Letter to Culture Film Directors." He began, "For today's cameramen, this comment hits where it hurts; if I were a director I would probably say the same thing about cameramen."[13] However, he went on to say that he believed the exact opposite was also true. Many *bunka eiga* directors knew absolutely nothing about the viewfinder. It seemed anyone could become a director. He noted that this was particularly surprising for him, coming as he did from the feature film side, where he had worked as cinematographer for the likes of Itami Mansaku, Murata Minoru, and Mizoguchi Kenji. He asserted that these talentless documentary directors relied on the senses and techniques of their cameramen. He wanted Kamei and other directors to be cognizant of this situation and the feelings of the cameramen. Miki's letter provoked responses from Akimoto and Kamei in the next issue of *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū*. They reveal much about the industrial and artistic conditions of documentary at this transitional point. Akimoto wrote:

> Unfortunately, I cannot find a reason to disagree [with Miki's letter]. Even if I tried to think clannishly, the present condition of the *bunka eiga* directors is pretty much what he said. At one studio, for example, assistant directors are forced to shoot a "trial" *bunka eiga* as the hallowed gate to become a director. If they get an okay, they "wash their feet" of the *bunka eiga* and are "promoted" to fiction filmmaking. Or an assistant director gradually gets old and they have to make him do something. However, when they can't think of making him do fiction, the studio heads use the *bunka eiga* to satisfy their sense of duty. This is why the *bunka eiga* section of the studio comes to take on the appearance of a mountain where they leave old people to die. . . . Even without receiving a letter from Miki, this has directly been our problem—the problem of we committed directors who stake our lives on proceeding down the *bunka eiga* path. It is a fact that we have fought for a long time with ten times Miki's indignation.[14]

Kamei noted:

> In a pure sense cinematography is the creative recording of the "phenomena" of reality. Direction means grasping the essential meaning of "phenomena"

> and structurally deciding the cuts (and scenes) required for communicating that. "Cameramen see things only through the viewfinder. They're like horses with blinders on"—this comment is a metaphorical explanation for the character of the cinematographer who is in charge of recording "phenomena" in the work of filmmaking. . . . Film production supposedly integrates the various divisions of labor in one job, and now this antagonism—we must be disciplined! Here's toward a collaborative spirit where individual skills achieve their greatest strength, their total meaning.[15]

Kamei started his open letter by carefully expanding on and explaining his comments and ended with a call for cooperation. In between, he became emotional, pointing out that since the publication of Miki's letter many cameramen, emboldened by Miki's public criticism, had begun showing ill feelings toward their directors. Kamei wrote that Japanese documentary had finally grown from its infancy into its childhood, and that was all the more reason directors and cameramen needed to take part in honest collaboration, so that documentary film could continue to mature. Miki answered both directors in a follow-up to his previous open letter in which he basically explicated his earlier message.[16] The fact was, he explained, there were serious problems with the relationship between directors and cameramen. Covering up the situation with simple calls for unity was only disregarding deeper issues. The public discussion ended there, but this brief, energetic exchange signaled a growing complexity in the documentary world.

The cameraman-viewfinder debate is important because it signals structural shifts in the industry that brought documentary to a new level. With its roots in the newsreel, the documentary started as a form deeply tied to a relatively simple rendering of history. Producers had yet to achieve a nuanced conception of nonfiction that recognized the constructed nature of the form, allowing them to shape their representations of the world in creative ways. With the documentary seen as a relatively unproblematic narration of events, the burden of creation rested on the cinematographers, with their visual records of events, and the editors who collated the images into coherence. However, as Japanese filmmakers gained access to films from places like Germany and Britain and were exposed to the film theory of filmmakers such as Rotha and Eisenstein, they attempted increasingly elaborate documentaries. A new breed of directors was emerging in the figures of Kamei, Ishimoto, Akimoto, Shimomura, and Atsugi, in tandem with cameramen such as Miki, Shirai, Hayashida, and Tanaka. These filmmakers were serious about their craft, and they made their presence felt from the early stages of production. Around the time of the cameraman-viewfinder debate, Japanese filmmakers began publishing other articles

and books on directing and scenario writing for the documentary. Along with the growing complexity of films and the concomitant expertise this required, there came the possibility of inserting various forms of discontent into the conventions of the hard style. As I have suggested, a number of filmmakers attempted this, but Kamei made it an art—brought to its highest level in *Fighting Soldiers* in 1939.

Fighting Soldiers was basically a *senki eiga,* or war record film, of the battle for Wuhan. It was one of the first documentaries made by a "director" (Kamei Fumio) who accompanied the cinematographer (Miki Shigeru) and the rest of the crew and had a say in the shooting of the images. Actually, dozens of other cameramen covered this same battle, especially for Asahi Shinbun, which released its own *senki eiga* titled *The Battle of Wuhan* (Wuhan sakusen; 1939). The differences between the two films reveal the distance between the old production method and the new style of documentary overseen by a directorial presence; they also suggest that the old cameraman-centered methodology continued in the realm of the news film. Miki was asked to write a commentary on *The Battle of Wuhan* for *Eiga to Gijutsu,* and he offered harsh criticism aimed directly at the film's mode of production. Asahi sent twenty-six cameramen to cover the action with no particular plan in hand. Without any forethought, the cinematographers tended to follow the action of the battle, to the exclusion of the soldiers' daily life and the hardships that war entails. This affected the photography itself; it included no extreme long shots or close-ups and nothing outside of battle footage. "I think the circumstances of the toil the fighting soldiers are subjected to for this great victory are not taken up in this film," Miki wrote. "Even if a documentary film simply communicates the war conditions, the connection to human life cannot be forgotten."[17] This attention to human life in the midst of war is precisely the attitude underlying *Fighting Soldiers*.

Anyone who has some familiarity with the Japanese war documentary can recognize that Kamei deploys all of the usual conventions of the hard style in *Fighting Soldiers*. However, by the end of the first scene, a double movement becomes evident, a schizophrenic aspect to the film. The surface of the film is basically the same as that of its contemporaries; the effect, however, is entirely different. As Tanaka Jun'ichirō has observed (in the work quoted in the epigraph above), the effect is chilling. Because of this, distribution of the film was stopped. Just before it was to be released to the public, the film was suppressed and the prints disappeared. A copy was finally discovered in 1975, allowing scholars and critics to reconsider one of the most extraordinary documentaries in film history.

Although the film was suppressed, Kamei's *Kinema Junpō* article

about the production appeared with an editor's note: "*Fighting Soldiers* was completed, but is being entirely revised for various reasons."[18] The article, titled "My Experience from *Fighting Soldiers*," is as fascinating as the film. For one thing, it is actually signed by Kamei, evidence of the emerging discourse of authorship developing around the figure of the director. In the article's text—and between the lines—one finds Kamei's position concerning documentary and war. He begins with a long nod to the military and its support, a section that consumes nearly a fifth of the page-long essay. He describes how his intention of shooting a massive war spectacle, a plan drawn at a desk, was thwarted by the sheer difficulty of photographing on the war-torn continent. He injects a humorous note by telling a story about ditching the four-man crew's mule for four rickshaws, but this is only the prelude to a passionate call for readers to recognize the difficulties of the soldiers themselves and the responsibilities of artists faced with such deadly circumstances. Here the article takes on the air of ambivalence so characteristic of Kamei's films:

> On the battlefield, what moved us more than anything was, in the end, the way the soldiers directly faced death, discarding selfishness and working with a sacrificial spirit, purely, simply. The mood of the soldiers living with an honest, most beautiful humanity . . . It is a matter of course that a so-called art, in an environment like today's nation, should actively participate in the nation's official plan. However, one cannot deny one facet of art, the instinct to pursue the beauty of humanity, which, in the end, exceeds eras and national borders. . . . *Fighting Soldiers* does not always show a positive theme in the nation's official plan. However, the producers did not, in the final instance, forget affection for the people enthusiastically participating in the nation's plan in this era.[19]

What begins with the confident language that always accompanies the hard style Kamei undercuts with a thinly veiled critique usually reserved for hidden spaces. The tone of Kamei's article escalates in intensity in the next section, which is devoted to the proper attitude during photography. He describes an incident in which a soldier was shot right in front of him and his crew. Rather than stopping to bandage the soldier, Kamei says, the proper attitude is to look directly at him and calmly turn the camera toward him. Whereas others compare the camera to a gun, Kamei suggests that it is equivalent to the cool but compassionate scalpel of a surgeon.[20] He continues with a second story about the violent shock of seeing human bones for the first time. Although it is extremely difficult, he says, the filmmaker must endeavor to face the violence of the scene while maintaining a sensitivity no different from his normal, everyday life back home. Kamei

ends this discussion with an impassioned plea: "Feel for the object! What's more, don't get perturbed!"[21]

Significantly, Kamei uses the word *taishō* (object) in this context. No other writer of the period discusses the "proper attitude" of the filmmaker vis-à-vis the filmed object, particularly in terms of this kind of "sympathetic" mind-set, which attempts to touch the experience of the other and transport those feelings into the film. As it happens, this is precisely the issue at the heart of documentary theory in Japan in the half century following surrender. It thoroughly informs the work of people like Hani Susumu, Tsuchimoto Noriaki, and Ogawa Shinsuke. With this in mind, we can think of *Fighting Soldiers* as the departure point for postwar documentary in Japan.

Unfortunately, few people outside of Japan have seen *Fighting Soldiers,* and access to the film itself is limited, so in the following pages I draw on a convention of Japanese film criticism—the inclusion of the scenario.[22] Combined with scene-by-scene commentary, the scenario reveals the movement of the film and its powerful cumulative effect. The confluence of new industrial practices, the sum of Kamei's and Miki's skill and experience, and the now concrete conventions of the conventional documentary form enabled the expression of dissent to be coded into this large-scale propaganda film. It was up to the reader to decode the double meaning.

Fighting Soldiers has no narration, only intertitles; in the scenario excerpts that follow, intertitles and subtitles are rendered in boldface type, and sequence descriptions appear in italics.

A Toho Culture Film Section Production

***Fighting Soldiers* Producer: Matsuzaki Keiji**

Direction/Editing: Kamei Fumio
Photography: Miki Shigeru
Location Sound: Fujii Shin'ichi
Sound: Kaneyama Kinjirō

During the shooting of this film
we received the good will
of the soldiers at the scene.

The opening credits are superimposed over a scene of the Chinese countryside.

In the first view of China, the horizon is flat and placed at the bottom of the frame to emphasize the expansive space of the continent. This is a

typical approach to photographing the Chinese topography in films shot on location, beginning with the early advertising films produced by the Southern Manchurian Railway Company. This opening shot is preceded by the inevitable nod to the military and its goodwill, aligning the documentary voice with the military and the defense of the nation. The title itself—*Fighting Soldiers*—directs the spectator to the authorized reading of the film. Furthermore, the discourse surrounding the film also inserts it firmly into the fabric of the public codes. For example, advertisements for *Fighting Soldiers* appeared in the major film magazines immediately preceding its release date. An advertisement in the March 1939 issue of *Nippon Eiga* features a close-up photograph of soldiers firing a machine gun, along with a dramatic illustration of a soldier raising his bayoneted rifle toward the sky. The February issue of the same magazine carried an advertisement with a muscular, shirtless soldier carrying two large shells through tall grass, with the copy, "The dawn of the continent settles into a dim rose color. At this very moment, upon the construction of an emerging Asian culture resolutely stands the national epic poem of the Japanese race." All of this encourages the spectators to expect a typical record of Japanese soldiers bravely engaging the enemy; however, cues for an alternative reading arrive swiftly in the first scene.

Now the continent
Experiences
Violent pangs of labor
To give birth to a New Order.

An old man prays before a roadside shrine, bowing deeply. A nearby house is on fire, and shots of it are intercut with children watching and a close-up of the man's face. Dark clouds give way to a bright sky, smoke wafting from distant trees, and a line of refugees walk on the dried mud of a road past devastated fields. Japanese soldiers look on. In a close-up, a roadside shrine statue seems to watch passing tanks and trucks. Attached to one truck is a Japanese flag that fills the screen; behind the flag pass the remains of Chinese homes.

The old man's prayer is a sign of his difference. Most films force other Asians to conform to the Japanese public codes. Usually, Koreans, Chinese, Taiwanese, and Pacific Islanders pray at Shinto shrines in Japanese films, or they bow in the direction of the emperor. By way of contrast, Kamei lets Chinese be Chinese; he allows them their difference, respecting the indigenous culture instead of attempting to replace it with his own.

But a question remains: What is this man praying for? If the image of

the burning house is not answer enough, the next shot calls on viewers to ask that question. It is an extreme close-up of the old man's rugged face, and the effect is shocking. This is one of the few extreme close-ups in the war documentary, and this old man is not smiling. It appears as though he is looking out at the Japanese audience, begging them to look closely and think. The next shot shows the roadside shrine at which the old man prays; the god's hands are brought up to its face, as if weeping.

Finally, a flag whips in the wind as the tank to which it is attached speeds down a country road, leaving the old man in its dust. The national flag is a potent icon in any war cinema. In the Japanese war documentary, the Japanese flag often frames the spectacle of the nation's new colonies, and the enemy's flag is usually stepped on or burned. The treatment of the Japanese national flag in this shot is typical only at the surface level. Its vigorous flapping in the wind may stir the fighting spirit in some spectators, but others will look behind it at the edges of the frame. There they will notice the seemingly endless ruins of Chinese homes (Figure 17). This is what is left in the wake of the Japanese flag and all it stands for. Likewise, the intertitle deploys a favorite trope of Japanese imperialism, but the double movement of the text makes the violence of the New Order available to those observant enough to "put two and two together."

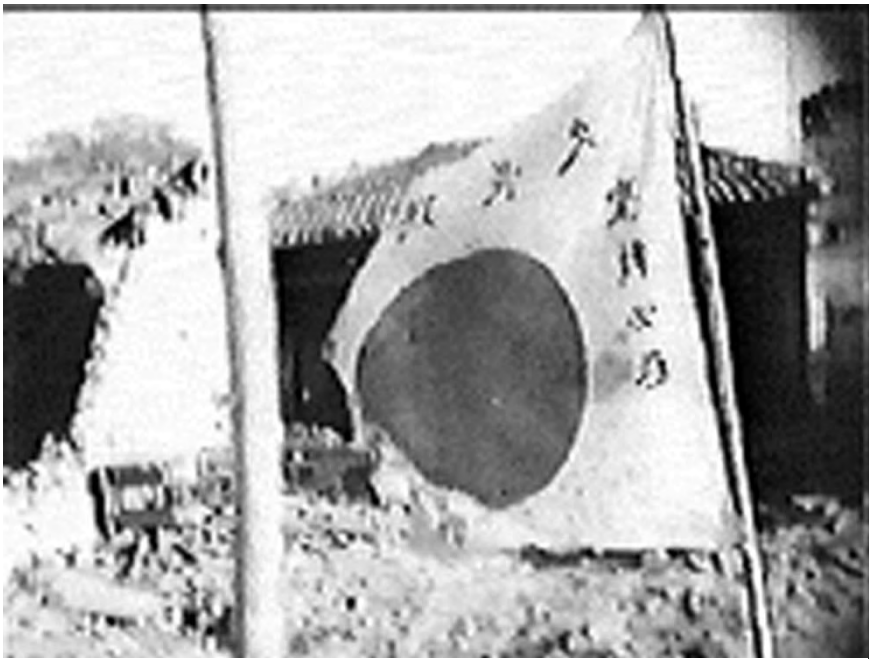


Figure 17. *Fighting Soldiers.*

The very front lines.

Supply trucks and tents, a row of sleeping soldiers, a horse grazing in a field. Other soldiers move tanks and horse carts.

The first view of the "fighting soldiers" is deeply ironic; these dozing warriors, spread out along the road like corpses, set the tone for the representation of Japanese troops to come.

A Chinese soldier is questioned by Japanese troops:
[subtitles]
How old are you?
Thirty.
Do you have children?
Two.
Do you want to go home?
I want to go home.
What do you do?
I'm a farmer.

Shots of the soldiers' daily lives: mending horseshoes, cleaning guns, and tending artillery.

This interview, one of the few moments of synchronized sound in *Fighting Soldiers,* gives the Chinese a voice in the fabric of the film. This instance of sync sound is more than a simple completion of representation, a filling of the aural void; it is a gift to the object. There are interview scenes like this in many other films (such as *Shanghai* and *China Incident*), but there the Chinese interviewees speak only of the kindness of the Japanese military. Here they speak of their misery. And they speak for the Japanese as well. These are the very answers that a Japanese soldier would give to the same questions (the next intertitle suggests as much). A typical film expresses the difference between Japanese and other Asians based on their physical and spiritual proximity to the emperor; Kamei identifies the two through their common suffering.

Outside a field hospital, aides sterilize surgical equipment. Inside, men are bandaged and operated on. An X ray shows a large bullet embedded into an ankle. A man peers into a microscope, followed by a shot of a slide shimmering with microbes—cholera.

On the Chinese continent,
No matter where you go the water is bad.

A sick soldier sleeps on the ground, cigarettes are distributed.

The soldiers
Often think of
The pure water of their homes.

The sanitation corps performs a test on the water.

The water supply unit arrives.

Soldiers drink the purified water while others cook. A long shot of the camp and mountains in the distance.

Dried vegetables Dried potatoes
Dried carrots With these
They make soup.
The soldiers
Want to eat
Fresh vegetables.

The soldiers and the horses eat. As the day ends, soldiers go about their evening duties, washing themselves, reading, and brushing the horses (whose ribs are beginning to show). In the distance, the sun sets behind sentries standing on enormous piles of supplies.

The film momentarily borrows from the science film's photomicroscopy, but only to compound the sense of homesickness—exploring the body's interior to discover the beleaguered spirit. The perils of life on the front include both disease and flying bullets, but the war itself still feels far away. This moment of rest, shown in pretty photography and silhouettes, feels like the calm before the storm. The silence is impressive. There is quiet music, as well as the barking of a dog, and the tone is contemplative. It is a refreshing departure from the loud preaching of most documentaries of the period.

The unit moved out
And left this land.

The camera pans repeatedly over the encampment the soldiers have left.

From the very day
The unit left
The farmers
Begin to work.

Farmers take to the land, tilling the earth of their paddies with spades.

Furthermore,
Here, already
The surging fires of war
Die out.

Near a Chinese shrine decorated with the Japanese flag, a family goes about daily chores. A child cries, a woman breast-feeds an infant. A man patches his roof while cows graze on dried grass.

The unit advances
Deep into the continent.

The path of the soldiers is illustrated by an animated map showing their route's relationship to the Yellow River, Canton, and Wuhan. The map is followed by images of a procession of horses, supply trucks, and foot soldiers.

The movement of the narrative follows the endless march, the topography of which is illustrated by animated maps. However, what is in the margins is more important than the orchestrated movement represented by the map. As the soldiers move on, the camp they leave looks no different from a scarred battlefield. Japanese soldiers are destructive simply by being in China—a devastating presence. Still, the Japanese soldiers come and go and life continues as it has for generations upon generations. There is a sense of continuity in the culture that is condensed in the image of the shrine. It is festooned with the Japanese colors, but in the context of the scenes of daily life, the intertitles, and the sudden shift to distinctively Chinese music, the flags are mere surface over something inherently and irrevocably Chinese.

There are times when
In the swift chase
Sick horses are left behind.
At these moments, the soldiers
Cry in their hearts,
However, in the waging of war
It can't be helped.

An empty country road recedes far into the barren landscape. In the foreground, a sick horse drops to its knees and finally falls to the ground.

This simple scene—an intertitle and a horse—is one of the most famous in Japanese film history. It de-aestheticizes the conventional violence of the

war documentary, and the deep sorrow of the hidden spaces emerges in force. This extraordinary sequence stands out from the film, if only for its length (it consists of two identical shots that bleed into each other, creating the sense of an excruciating single take). The music in the background is dark and borrows the melody of a song about horses. The authorized reading directed by the intertitle (the innocent compassion of the Japanese soldiers) is undercut by the sheer length of the shot, the music, and the unusual spectacle of a dying animal. The way this sequence provokes our recognition of the ontological difference of the documentary image of death probably approaches what Tosaka was calling for just two years earlier. For an audience looking closely, this horse transforms into a powerfully moving icon for the suffering of everyone and everything in the war (Figure 18).

Following the shots of the horse, we see mountains in silhouette and hear the sounds of gunfire and mortars exploding. Soldiers run across fields in the distance.

The soldiers fight desperately.

A medium close-up shows one soldier shooting a machine gun.

On the eternal nature of the continent,
They carve
A page of history.

The camera pans past a huge tree.

[superimposed subtitle]
Mount Ro.

Shot of a massive mountain.

[superimposed subtitle]
Ro Peak.

A quick shot of a Japanese grave marker is followed by views of mountain ranges, a tree scarred by the flames of the battlefield, and a white swan floating down a creek.

Up to this point, the film has patiently followed the soldiers between battles at a quiet, relaxed pace, culminating in the sequence of the horse giving up on life. Suddenly the fighting begins in a flurry of intertitles and shots. Kamei swiftly intercuts between images of fighting soldiers and images of nature. The puny human beings are easily dwarfed by the massive bulk of the mountains. Yes, the Japanese are carving a page in history, as



Figure 18. *Fighting Soldiers.*

the intertitle suggests, but it is only one page. The next chapter will not necessarily be authored by Japan.

An officer sits behind a desk in an abandoned farmhouse.

Headquarters at the front lines.

In a sequence that lasts more than five minutes, the officer gives commands to foot soldiers, who take them to the front lines. Soldiers constantly come back from the front lines with reports, then leave with new orders. The officer finally gathers his things and walks out the door; just outside the door he gives a speech to his assembled soldiers before heading off to the fighting. After this extremely long sequence, we see images of troops running across the battlefield and firing guns. A couple of soldiers carry a wounded man in a stretcher over a small hill and toward the camera; at the same time, other soldiers ferry more ammunition past them, back to the front.

Films deploying the hard style display a fetishistic attitude toward strategy and turn the chain of command into visual spectacle. At the same time, the violence produced by this system has to be elided, shown obliquely and in aesthetically pleasing ways. In this sequence of an officer receiving battlefield reports and dispatching orders, the spectacle of the command structure and the fascination for battlefield tactics come together. Iwasaki and others have noted that it was staged, and have pointed to this as evidence of Rotha's hold over Kamei's conception of cinema—the dramatization of actuality? Actually, Kamei learned of Rotha only after his return from China. This scene is simply the result of an experiment. Whether it is successful or not, thrilling or boring, depends on the viewer.

What is most interesting about the sequence is its ending and the missing scene that it gestures toward. The last shot shows a wounded soldier being carried over a hill, toward the camera; at the same time, a corresponding set of soldiers carry more ammunition away from the camera, toward the battle (which is audibly present throughout in ominous gunshots and explosions), and then another set of soldiers return from the front with a body on a stretcher. The extant print continues to the next intertitle, but the original film included one more shot: the setting is a clearing in a dark wood at night—a group of soldiers holds a funeral for a friend, cremating his corpse on a pyre. The sounds of the fire crack on the sound track. Kamei's narrativized glimpse of death threatened to disrupt the carefully glamorized sacrifice violence of the hard style. Now we can only wonder who excised this shot from the print. Luckily, the following scene escaped that fate, thanks to its indirectness.

We will die for the Emperor—
When they think of this phrase
The soldiers' emotions surge beautifully upward.

Wild fields and the silhouette of a single tree. A candle burns in front of a funeral urn. Four soldiers sit before a small shrine for a dead friend; one reads a letter while the others sit and listen:

> [Female voice-over] *We sincerely think of your hardships. On the 18th, the newspaper . . . wrote about how Kamiyama fell. We were all surprised . . . and sad. It doesn't say if he was killed or wounded in action. Every day, I read the newspapers, but until today there has been no announcement. I can't work because I am waiting for a notice. . . .*

Shots of a photograph, an urn, and a steel helmet.

> [Female voice-over] *Some time ago you asked about the children's photograph. The way they did the photograph delayed it, and it was finally finished a few days ago. Because of the reason I mentioned above, I have been waiting to send it. As of today, there has been no notice of any kind. I sent the children's photograph anyway, thinking you might still be alive. The entire family is doing very well, so please do not worry. More than anything please be patient, and work as hard as you are able for the sake of His Majesty the Emperor.*
> *—September 23. Your Wife.*

This kind of gathering must certainly have occurred over and over throughout the war years, but the appearance of such a scene in a documentary was unprecedented. It probably survives in the extant print because it deals with death in a manner sanctioned by the public codes. The intertitle evokes typical conventions for representing death, aestheticizing it. The intertitle quotes "If We Go to the Ocean," a song that appeared in nearly every war-related film produced between the Manchurian Incident and the decimation of Nagasaki (see chapter 4 for the lyrics). It is so familiar that Kamei needs only to quote the opening line to evoke the song in the mind of every spectator.

Just as this aestheticization of violence contains certain charms for the spectators, there are also unconscious aspects to experiencing Kamei's subversion. The critique is available to the witting spectator who *sees* it, but it can also be *felt*. First of all, the soldiers we see sitting in the darkness hardly look as though their emotions are beautifully surging; there is a gap between the description of emotive song and these contemplative men. Kamei follows this with iconic links to home and family—the letter, the

photograph—"lifelines" between the continent and the home islands. The overwhelming irony of the words spoken by the dead man's wife—privileged as the film's single nondiegetic voice—quietly, even unconsciously, undermines the rhetoric of dying for the emperor. By departing from the hard-and-fast convention of a voice-of-God narration, Kamei necessitates a more active spectatorship. This strategy builds a nebulousness into the fabric of the film and directs viewers to a reading that resists the acceptance of—the desire for—the sacrificial death. Kamei forcefully demonstrates the subversive potential of melodrama.

On this kind of night For the soldiers
The cry of the donkeys
Frequently pierces their ears.

While one soldier sleeps, another reads by candlelight. The camera pans around the room, showing sleeping soldiers. Outside, a guard keeps night watch. Morning—the sun breaks over the horizon. Someone shouts, "Morning assembly!" and the troops fall into line. They take off their hats, bow toward the Imperial Palace, and recite the Imperial Rescript for Soldiers in a spirited chorus.

The intertitle refers the audience to the sound track, and its "this kind of night" directs their reading. The innocent cry of the donkeys is easily converted into a wail of loss. This is directly followed by a standard war film scene that pivots on the ever-popular image of the rising sun. The recitation of the Imperial Rescript is significant for more than the conventions of military conduct the chanting soldiers promise to uphold. It is also an expression of their devotion to an unseen point. The soldiers face the center—the far-off Imperial Palace—and doff their hats and bow in silent reverence. They move in unison, physically displaying the hold this invisible center has on its periphery.

A morning close to the Meiji Emperor's Birthday
The unit starts
The final advance
Toward Wuhan.
Just before that departure . . .

The soldiers fall in at a trumpet call. Tank drivers climb into their machines and set off one by one. Planes start up their propellers and take off. An officer mounts his horse, and the troops march off. When they meet a shallow river, one of the trucks becomes bogged down and the soldiers jump in to push it out of the mud. Long columns of soldiers and horses march through

the countryside, passing the husks of burned-out cars and the bones of horses along the way. A map traces their route toward Wuhan.

What sets this scene apart is its length and the sheer tediousness of watching it. In terms of conventions, it draws on the diarylike structure of the *senki*. However, unlike a typical *senki,* the traveling scenes are overly long, palpably suggesting how exhausting these marches were for the soldiers by taxing the spectators themselves.

The advance detachment.

Scouts divide into groups of four and five, followed by the lines of troops.

The day Wuhan's anti-Japanese forces crumble.

Close-up of the Kuomintang flag. A white flag flies over the ruined city of Wuhan. Farmers and city people walk through the streets filled with smoke. Inside a Russian Orthodox church, an image of Jesus looks down on a single nun praying among dozens of candles. We see a close-up of a bearded priest. Outside, the streets are empty except for rubble. Inside a Chinese temple, incense wafts around the image of Buddha. Three puppies play at the foot of a ruined set of stairs. Everything is silent, except for their quiet whines. Over more images of deserted streets, the sound of marching fades in. The Japanese soldiers finally come into view, marching in orderly columns down the street as a bugle call announces their arrival. They stop in a square, eventually filling it.

One of the most widely used conventions of Japanese war documentary and newsreels is the victorious march into the captured city. After battle scenes of soldiers firing guns at unseen enemies, just like those in *Fighting Soldiers,* the troops organize themselves into orderly lines. With the officers on horses in front (always displaying rank as a matter of course), they march past flag-waving citizens as they enter the liberated city or village.

Kamei begins his victory march into Wuhan in a far different manner. Once again, he includes the sights and sounds of non-Japanese religions, bringing the heterogeneity of China's cultures into relief, in contrast to other directors who attempt to erase all difference. Instead of the obligatory military march music, we hear liturgical chanting followed by silence; instead of lines of passionately happy citizens, there are only shattered buildings and parentless puppies. Gradually, the silence is pierced by the rhythmic sound of troops marching; it echoes through the empty city. The atmosphere is ominous, and when we finally see the specter of soldiers marching through the deserted streets, they look absolutely frightening.

Kamei reverses the perspective of the victory march scene, so that we identify with the point of view of the victimized citizenry.

Hankou. On Ekanseki Square
The music corps
Conducts a performance.

The city square gradually fills with vehicles and Japanese soldiers. A band begins to perform.

The soldiers
Do not speak of brilliant military exploits
Do not speak of honor.
Simply put,
After accomplishing
A great task
They comfortably rest their weary bodies
And quietly enjoy themselves.

A military brass band plays patriotic marches. Soldiers relax and listen.

The soldiers
Go over
The desolated battlefield.

Soldiers examine the city, passing new acquisitions such as the Hong Kong–Shanghai Bank. A butterfly flits among the flowers. Chinese watch the soldiers pass. Japanese soldiers rest.

Although Kamei includes the obligatory military march, he places the scene "too late" from the perspective of convention. Bits and pieces of the usual march scene—the entrance and the lines of happy civilians—are rewritten and disjointed, split in half on either side of the concert. The Chinese citizens who should have lined the street upon the Japanese soldiers' arrival watch as the troops drive through the city after the performance. Unlike their conventional counterparts, these "liberated" Chinese wave no flags; their faces register only pain. For their part, the Japanese "liberators" are a pitiful sight in their tattered clothes, too weary to shoo away the swarms of flies that cover their bodies; it has often been said that they have the look of death in their faces.

On this day
Already On the back streets
As can be seen In the scorched earth

Moves
The will to live.

Chinese adults and children pick through the rubble for scrap metal. Others cook meals and gossip in the streets. Children play with some puppies, and a Japanese battleship moves into the harbor.

Many films of the war period end with battleships cruising on the ocean to the tune of the "March of the Battleships," a song that today is often heard blaring from pachinko parlors. Splitting huge waves and firing their guns, they symbolize Japan's march to victory. The ship at the end of *Fighting Soldiers* slips quietly—ominously?—into the harbor, presumably to disgorge its soldiers to continue China's "violent pangs of labor."

***Fighting Soldiers* The End**

It appears that the various departments of Toho were operating under differing assumptions regarding *Fighting Soldiers*. Although some were preparing to release the film into the public arena, others were contemplating the film's suppression. Before screening the film for the public, Toho held a number of industry previews, released pamphlets, and published impressive advertisements in film magazines. Kamei also wrote his article about the camera team's journey to China for *Kinema Junpō*. The response was generally favorable at the previews, but the studio knew it had a problem. The film had yet to be sent to the censors, and studio executives sensed it would be tripped up in the censorship process. This was the era immediately preceding the Film Law, and the studios knew they had to be careful. To prevent the retribution they imagined lay in store, the studio heads decided unilaterally to shelve the film before it faced the censors. Toho's capital investment in the film was sacrificed for the sake of what the executives felt was their actual survival. They did not reprimand the director. Liberalist Mori Iwao only gave Kamei a friendly prod: "In this kind of era, that kind of thinking doesn't pay, Kamei-kun."[23]

The suppression sent shock waves through the documentary film industry. Occasionally, it was referred to in magazines as "the *Fighting Soldiers* Problem," but this was never explicated. One has to look to the spaces of the hidden to find more frank discussion. For example, the mimeographed minutes from a private 1943 study group within Nichiei reveal that *Fighting Soldiers* was still weighing on the minds of filmmakers four years after it was suppressed. In the midst of a discourse on the nature of the *senki eiga,* one participant brings up the "lesson" of Kamei's film:

> The human face itself is decisively not the purpose of the war record film. This is also something that I think everyone here generally agrees on. In this regard, war films that pursue humanity run the danger of [illegible]. For example, there is the example of the danger of *Fighting Soldiers* when it was [illegible] because it went too far in pursuing humanity. This kind of opinion was also heard, but in the case of our production of war films, it made us feel we must be extremely careful.[24]

Kamei continued to make challenging films. When Nagano prefecture hired Toho to make a tourist film to draw visitors to the region, Kamei was given the job. He spent time in the mountainous prefecture researching its history and culture. Eventually, he produced a plan for a trilogy of films, which he would make with Shirai Shigeru as cameraman. The first installment, *Inabushi,* came out in 1940; the next was *Kobayashi Issa,* which came out the following year. With *Issa,* Kamei once again found himself in trouble. He structured the film around the life and poetry of the famous haiku poet of the title.[25] Issa's poetry graced the intertitles as well as the narration spoken by former *benshi* Tokugawa Musei. Kamei also attempted to create a style that complemented the poetry, alternating between lovely long shots of farmers working in the field and extreme close-ups of their rugged faces.[26] Not all of the faces are smiling. As it happened, neither the Nagano farmers nor Issa himself had a very happy life. Nagano prefecture had, of course, ordered a tourist film, but Kamei delivered a thinly veiled exposé of the desperate living conditions and hunger of the people living in the region. Kamei undercut typical tourist film sequences with irony and clever montage, such as a trip to the famous Zenkōji Temple, where he notes blind peasants giving donations to wealthy priests. Throughout the film, Issa's own haiku insert an obscure subtext into the clarity of the public conventions, infusing the documentary with a poetic feel. In all these aspects, *Issa* has strong similarities to Buñuel's *Land without Bread* (1933), a sponsored tourist film with surrealistic touches that revealed the brutal poverty of rural Spain. When the studio submitted *Issa* to the Ministry of Education for certification, the ministry refused to recognize it. Now critics spoke of "the *Kobayashi Issa* Problem." Without recognition, the film could not achieve wide distribution, so the studio capitalized on the incident by making the rejection the centerpiece of the film's publicity. Not surprisingly, Kamei never produced the third film of the planned trilogy.[27]

Kamei insisted that he did not expect the *Issa* trouble; after all, the approach he took could be found in a number of films about rural hardship, such as *Snow Country* and *Village without a Doctor.* On the other hand, he did suspect that his script for a science film called *Mount Fuji's*

Geological Features (Fuji no chishitsu; 1940) might meet resistance. Kamei's scenario was to be directed by Akimoto Takeshi. They wanted to look at Mount Fuji with the cold eye of science. It was an approach *Eiga Junpō*'s film reviewer singled out for criticism, as it interfered with his desire for "intimacy" with the mountain.[28] By encoding elements of the hidden discursive field into the standard conventions of the educational science film, Kamei and Akimoto could mock the metaphysics underpinning the accepted representations of Mount Fuji—the sacred icon of Japan's beautiful, perfect history. As Kamei suspected, they were eventually asked to change the ending, which compared Fuji to a nearby volcano that had eroded into an ugly, amorphous mass. Here is the script for Kamei's original ending:

> —Mount Aitaka over the shoulder of Mount Fuji.
>
> NARRATION: In the past this Mount Aitaka was a beautiful mountain like Fuji with a conical shape. However, tens of thousands of years ago the original shape was destroyed because of continuous erosion, and now it has become a volcano whose features show their old age.
>
> —Mount Fuji's beautiful appearance.
>
> NARRATION: Now in its middle ages, beautiful Mount Fuji will also grow old as time passes. Like Mount Aitaka, it will lose its beautiful figure.
>
> —Fuji and Aitaka.
>
> NARRATION: From the contrast in these two mountains we can learn about nature's law of constant change.
>
> —Summit of Mount Fuji, obscured by clouds.[29]

After the war, Kamei jokingly called this his "natural dialectic."[30] Kamei and Akimoto entered the film in a Cabinet Information Board competition, thinking it would pass if only because its subject was Mount Fuji. The ending was found unacceptable, and the board suggested the addition of a nationalistic song with lyrics about Fuji's flawless beauty. The filmmakers refused. Instead, they inserted an image of Fuji's summit obscured by clouds, accompanied by oblique narration about the mountain's uncertain future. The film was released, but the credits in the film's advertisements did not mention Kamei's contribution.[31]

In October 1941, Kamei received an early-morning visit from plainclothes Special High Police officers, who arrested him and put him in a Setagaya jail. As in Iwasaki's case, the conditions were poor and the filmmaker was given only vague reasons for his arrest, something to do with the Peace Preservation Law. Kamei had to wait a month before he underwent any serious questioning. When they finally interrogated him, they asked about his time in Russia and his films, particularly *Fighting Soldiers*.

Kamei had been aware that the military found his filmmaking problematic. For example, on the release of *Shanghai,* a knife-wielding army officer burst into the office of the army's information section and demanded to know why such a dark film had been made. Outside of the *Kobayashi Issa* and *Fighting Soldiers* problems, there was also the time that *Issa* received an award as best film of the year from the Directors Association (along with Toyoda Shirō's *Spring on Leper's Island* [Kojima no haru; 1940]); the Education Ministry threatened the organization, and the decision was rescinded.

The government remained vague regarding the charges against Kamei, but it was likely that the sum of Kamei's career was the problem, heightened by his biography's liberal revision and the authorities' own paranoia. An internal government summary of left-wing movements summed up the government's position on Kamei:

> Kamei Fumio, who was a member of the *bunka eiga* section of Toho Film Corporation, went to Russia in May 1929 and studied proletarian filmmaking. In 1931 he returned to Japan. In 1932, he entered Toho Film Corporation (which was then called PCL), where he works to this day. Kamei claimed that the mainstream fiction film is a bourgeois cinema of entertaining, unrealistic love stories, and as such promotes the ordinary people's attitude of escaping from reality. From the point of view of dialectical materialism, he planned *bunka eiga* (documentary films) that analyze and describe social reality and show audiences the true form of society's reality. Since then, Kamei hinted at the misery of the war in *Shanghai* (December 1937) and *Fighting Soldiers* (April 1939). And he showed the necessity of the creation of capitalist society from the materialist point of view, as shown in *Inabushi* (August 1940) and exposed indirectly the miserable situation of Shinano peasants and the hypocritical life of Zenkōji Temple priests in *Kobayashi Issa*. He wrote film criticism based on dialectical materialism in magazines such as *Bunka Eiga* and *Eiga Hyōron*. He also promoted the rise of antiwar consciousness.[32]

After nearly two years of imprisonment, Kamei was set free on probation in August 1943. Kimura Sotoji, who had been working on the continent, offered to set him up with a position at the Manchurian Motion Picture Association. Kamei asked his probation office for permission to take the job, but was denied. Another offer came from Sakurai Kodo, who had owned a small production company in Kyoto. In the latest round of forced amalgamations, his company had been dissolved into Dentsū, where he became an executive. Before he could join Dentsū, Kamei had to pass the director's test, as stipulated by the Film Law. He went before a board of his peers—Ozu, Mizoguchi, Uchida, Shimazu—and a representative from the Education Ministry. His peers were embarrassed to submit Kamei to such a demeaning ritual, but the bureaucrat asked, "So what do you think

of the *Kojiki?*"[33] Kamei replied, "It's literature." The official was upset, but Kamei managed to pass. This was a typical example of the kinds of performances required of filmmakers by the public codes, forcing them to display their acquiescence to power. Kamei compared such rituals to the old custom of *fumie,* when Christians were forced to step on images of Christ and renounce their faith.

Historians and biographers of Kamei have lightly dismissed his tenure at Dentsū, and Kamei's autobiography is just as unhelpful.[34] Typically, writers have mentioned only that he worked on *Chicken* (Niwatori; 1944) and *Potato Sprout* (Jagaimo no me; 1944), apparently because these two films are prominently mentioned in Tokugawa Musei's popular autobiography. However, this period of Kamei's life cannot be so easily ignored. From announcements buried in *Nippon Eiga,* we discover that he also wrote and directed such films as *Spy Protection Film* (Bochō eiga; 1944), *Festivals of Japan* (Nihon no matsuri; 1944), and *Security of the Skies* (Seikū; 1945).[35] Of these, only *Security of the Skies* is extant—and it surfaced only in the mid-1990s. The film, which describes the work of the massive Nakajima Airplane Corporation and its two hundred thousand employees, was completed in August 1945. Japan surrendered just as Kamei wrapped up postproduction, and the film was never released publicly. It survived the chaos of the war's end by the slimmest of margins. In the wake of the surrender, Dentsū found itself financially devastated. Hungry for hard cash, the studio approached the officials at the airplane factory about buying the unreleased film. Fujimori Masami, who was in charge of planning at the factory and actually appears in the film, bought the print. Upon his death, he bequeathed it to the Film Center.[36] Fujimori thought of the film only as a wartime record of his business; the archivists immediately recognized its larger implications for history and for Kamei's reputation, and the sensitivity that its return to the world would demand. They did not divulge news of the film's discovery until they could arrange for it to be part of a 1997 retrospective of wartime documentary and so be seen in proper context.

Now that we can see *Security of the Skies,* it is obvious why it is not addressed in most biographies of Kamei: it is no different from the most enthusiastic propaganda film. It follows a single young man's entry into public life in the closing days of the war. In the examination process he goes through to work at the airplane factory, he is asked why he wants to serve there. The boy's answer takes the form of a flashback. He wants to be a pilot, but he fails the exam. He is crushed, but a friend who made the cut cheers him up by telling him to make the planes he'll fly. They seal a promise that the boy will make great planes, and the friend will fly them

into battle as part of the *tokkōtai* (the suicide bombers at the end of the war). Together, they'll beat the American enemy. The boy passes his exam and enters the workforce.

As one might expect, the next sequence follows his training: exercise scenes, kendo, physics classes, Zen meditation, and the like. The trainees learn to use the tools of their trade by hammering in unison while an instructor blows a whistle. The training also includes education films, and Kamei quotes a *bunka eiga* on traditional sword making. It shows each step in the hammering and polishing process, and ends with a demonstration of the sword's ability to slice through a Kuomintang helmet. In case the students did not figure out the point, a postscreening speech to the audience brings it home. The Japanese sword is not simply metal; this is what the "barbarians" think. This is because the soul of the maker is instilled in the Japanese sword. The speech continues with close-ups of the trainees' little faces as they listen intently. The barbarians have analyzed the Japanese sword and attempted to imitate it, but they failed because they do not have the Japanese spirit. There is no difference between making a sword and making a fighter plane. You must be diligent and put your entire being into every little part of the machine.

As their training continues, the factory managers meet to discuss new orders from the air force requesting 50 percent more planes. While setting up the narrative device that propels the plot to its happy end, this scene also indicates that the war is not going well. There are other reminders throughout the film as well. One sequence uses news films to describe the funeral for General Yamamoto, the man who led the attack on Pearl Harbor. Newspaper headlines about B-29 bomber attacks on cities are shown, and radio reports on the bombings are heard in the background. Intertitles decry their brutality: "Planes have attacked the Imperial Palace—Our fathers, mothers and siblings are being killed." In one striking sequence, the factory itself comes under American attack. The lights go out, and searchlights crisscross the sky and settle on an American plane. Heavy guns start firing and bombs start dropping. Kamei cuts to the factory floor, where all the workers remain at their posts, ignoring the explosions in the background in total concentration. The sequence ends the following day: in the factory's secretary pool, a radio broadcasts the news that nearly all the American planes were downed as the camera trucks through the rows of desks up to an enormous Japanese flag.

There is far less of a sense of urgency in this film than there is in Atsugi and Akimoto's *We Are Working So So Hard*. The optimism of the narrative strand smothers that brand of pressure with its own kind of total concentration on our hero. As *Security of the Skies* continues, he

starts getting thrilling letters from his friend in the South Seas. The voice-over narration of the letters connects the front lines with the factory work on the home front, impressing upon the workers the seriousness of their less-than-glamorous mission. At one point, an older, slovenly worker complains of a headache and goes back to his dorm room, only to break out the sake. As he lies dead drunk on the floor, a doctor drags in our hero, who has collapsed from working so hard. As he recuperates, he keeps trying to return to the factory, but he is told that his friends will work extra hard and longer hours to make up for him: "If we all have your spirit, it will be certain victory!"

The ending is predictable. He returns to work. Productivity rises. The factory meets the air force order. The planes go from nuts and bolts to flying machines through the magic of montage. The workers watch, waving flags and crying. But this is a false ending. Just as the music swells and planes soar through the air, headed for the front, and the final shot seems imminent, Kamei cuts to a close-up of a distinguished man against a white background. In direct address to the camera, the man begins a speech about *Security of the Skies,* exhorting the audience (us) to work harder and harder in order to defeat the enemy, just like the student workers we saw in the film. In the middle of this speech, the camera moves back, revealing a profilmic audience of children listening closely to the man, who is actually standing before a movie screen stretched between bamboo poles, on which *Security of the Skies* was presumably screened moments ago. As he continues, the camera jumps back even farther to reveal a vast crowd of children. In the distance is the screen set against a building, and in the far, far background rises a graceful Mount Fuji. In this, the real climax of the film, the man passionately addresses the children: After watching this movie, you must keep its message in your hearts. Join the war production effort and the air force. After you graduate from this school, you must make new weapons, putting your spirit in them. Those who will do this raise your hands! A thousand little arms fly toward the sky with the chorus, *"Hai!"*

Aside from its unusually complex narrative, *Security of the Skies* is an example of remarkably awkward filmmaking. It has terribly rough sound, especially considering it is the work of the maker of *Peking*. The editing by the director of *Fighting Soldiers* is surprisingly clunky. It is an embarrassing film. However, one can imagine a different reading. One might expect roughness considering the fact that the film was made in the desperate days before the end of the war. Its thorough mix of fiction and documentary represents a continuation of the experimentation inspired by Rotha. The narrative sequences deploy the slow pans and crane shots, the drawn-out pauses and

silent moments of emoting, that Darrell Davis identifies as the monumental style. Its plotting—particularly its use of parallel characters, documentary quotations, and the false ending—is far more complicated than that seen in other *bunka eiga* of the war years. The film's cinematography is actually quite striking, and its formalist compositions of bodies and machines invite comparison to Soviet films. Montage sequences are scattered throughout.

However, there is no getting around the fact that this is a fervent propaganda film designed to incite children to hate the American barbarians and sacrifice their lives for the emperor. One can only imagine what Kamei's *Spy Protection Film* was like. The reasons these films have been purged from Kamei's filmography are clear enough. The historians would certainly have trouble reconciling these films' existence with their image of Kamei (imagine the filmmaker's own relationship to this work). The standard view of Kamei Fumio presents him as the only filmmaker who publicly resisted the war and the only one put in prison for his efforts. Put another way, this is Kamei as radical auteur. He put his personal stamp on an impersonal genre of cinema. That he accomplished this in an age of apostasy and conformity to the public codes is all the more impressive.

There is, however, another way to look at the director. No one has asked the obvious question: How in the world did Kamei think he could get away with *Fighting Soldiers*? Answering this question will challenge our assumptions and help us understand both Kamei Fumio and wartime Japan.

Fighting Soldiers masterfully weaves the hidden discursive field into the representations authorized by power, but it is by no means deeply hidden. Anyone can tell this film was not designed to inspire the fighting spirit. From this perspective, Kamei had to be either crazy or incompetent. A more likely scenario is that the stereotypical image of the 1930s as a "dark valley" of oppressive censorship and rabid support for the war blinds us to quite different currents in popular culture. People were still enjoying the latest Hollywood films shortly before Pearl Harbor; one of the most popular films in Japan in November 1941 was Frank Capra's *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939). The film magazines advertised the Hollywood movies alongside more militarist subjects, and for many filmmakers the 1930s were an exciting time for experimentation and dabbling in the fruits of modernism. Seen in this context, the very existence of *Fighting Soldiers* suggests that there was far more play in the public discursive field than the popular image of the war era suggests. Kamei may have been pushing boundaries, but he still thought he could make a film like *Fighting Soldiers* without risking serious retribution or threats.

Furthermore, although Kamei is always singled out as unique, it is far more useful to see him as expressing a discourse far larger than himself, a

discourse usually reserved for individual thoughts or privileged conversation in safe, hidden spaces. We must not forget that Kamei's films have much in common with those of the other committed documentary filmmakers of the day—Ishimoto, Itō, Miki, Shirai, Akimoto, Ueno, Atsugi, and others. All of these films express a deep compassion for those experiencing the hardships of daily life in difficult times, physical and spiritual suffering, and exhaustion. They strike a note of discord with the tone of the public style. Kamei always puzzled his postwar fans by insisting, "I did not necessarily have any intention of making an antiwar film [with *Fighting Soldiers*]. . . . My greatest concern was thoroughly describing the pain of the land and the sadness of all people, including soldiers, farmers, and all living things like horses."[37] If we see *Fighting Soldiers* in the context of these other filmmakers' work, it looks less like an "antiwar" film and more like an expression of the struggle and sadness the war required of all people. Kamei himself does not appear to be unique, and thus his postprison turn to the production of propaganda film appears far less enigmatic, far more typical. Kamei stands out from the others for the scale of his films, his impressive aesthetic ambitions, and the degree to which he exposed his discontent.

Moreover, Kamei's canny manipulation of the public codes relied on a submerged discourse that other people could understand, that other people helped create, and that he could tap into to make meaning. The very existence of this community provided Kamei the courage to display the hidden discursive field in the teeth of power. In the postwar period, Japanese have been taken to task for a self-pity that emphasizes their own suffering during the war despite their being the aggressors. This insistence on their own victimization has seemed like an attempt to excuse themselves from any responsibility for the war. The terms of this debate are beyond the scope of this study, but the documentaries of the day suggest the need to see a continuity straddling 1945: this sense of suffering and victimization reveals the continuing relevance of the wartime hidden codes.

[7] *After Apocalypse: Obliteration of the Nation*

> *August 15, while waiting to hear that radio broadcast, I was eating lunch alone. While I listened to the broadcast, a feeling of liberation filled my breast*—Finally! *I threw my rice bowl at the ceiling.*
>
> :: Kamei Fumio, Nichiei basement, 15 August 1945[1]

On 14 August 1945, Japanese in every part of Asia were told to assemble for an important radio broadcast the following day. At the appointed time, they gathered to listen and heard something they never would have expected: the emperor's own voice. His language was thick with old, obscure expressions, but everyone understood enough to realize the war was over. This scene—replayed over and over in biographies, autobiographies, essays, history books, documentaries, and fiction films—represented the sudden obliteration of the nation all Japanese had devoted their lives to building and protecting. This traumatic moment also marked the instant evaporation of government controls and the codes for representation they helped shape. Surrender and occupation cut loose the familiar tropes that anchored representation; "meaning" abruptly flew in new directions. When Itō Sueo greeted the first American troops landing on Japanese soil, photographing them with one of the "weapons" of the information war, he suddenly began to worry that the nervous, heavily armed troops would mistake his camera for a gun—mistake photographing for shooting.[2] The pressing question was: Now that the camera was no longer a weapon, what was it?

Until this point, the conventions of the hard style had guaranteed the meanings of cinematic representations. The manner in which history was rendered in film was authorized and concretized through decades of development, conventionalization, and repetition, but now that Japan was

under American authority, all the conventions on which Japanese filmmakers had relied were utterly useless. After the emperor's broadcast, Kamei Fumio later recalled, he met a colleague who was packing his bags and heading for the country in somber defeat. Defeat and surrender had left his friend in a vacuum, completely empty and powerless. Kamei, on the other hand, was ecstatic; now he could really work. He stayed on at Nichiei, along with other filmmakers such as Iwasaki Akira and Negishi Kan'ichi. This chapter examines the first two major Japanese documentaries produced immediately after surrender: *A Japanese Tragedy* and *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.* These first efforts are curious films, for the filmmakers were clearly struggling with the proper response to the sudden annihilation of the old public conventions. *A Japanese Tragedy,* produced by Iwasaki Akira and Kamei Fumio, provided the filmmakers an opportunity to release energies that had been pent up for years and to express the formerly hidden discursive field. A far more obscure film, *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* points toward elemental aspects of documentary cinema—or it could also represent a platform for continuation of the war. Both films were suppressed and lost for decades, suggesting the emergence of new public codes for the post–World War II world.

The Flying Rice Bowl: *A Japanese Tragedy*

Kamei's first postwar film was *A Japanese Tragedy,* with Iwasaki Akira acting as producer. The film was apparently made at the suggestion of David Conde, who, in his role as chief of the Cinema and Drama Section of the Civil Information and Education Department during the occupation, was basically in charge of the entire Japanese film industry. The Americans were well aware of the power of film, and they deployed the medium to facilitate the peaceful democratization of Japan. To that end, they actively promoted certain kinds of filmmaking and prevented others through an elaborate censorship system. Conde wanted Nichiei to put more effort into documentary and suggested that the studio produce a film that would cover the history of the war, explain its root causes to the Japanese people, and ask them to think about how to prevent future conflicts. Kamei and Iwasaki's response was *A Japanese Tragedy.* The filmmakers took the meager resources at hand, primarily Nichiei's library of newsreels, and recounted the past fifteen years in the national life. The film was not widely seen in 1946, but more recent evaluations of the film have often been critical. For example, Yamane Sadao writes:

> We can highly appreciate [the film's] reticent attitude toward authority. However, giving present thought to the matter, because the film devoutly followed the ideology of the Japan Communist Party, it featured only a loud voice criticizing opponents. Stretching the point, such production methods designed to stress specific ideology might be closely connected to that applied to the production of films "exalting the fighting spirit" during the war. At the very least, here one cannot find the subtle touch of Kamei's *Fighting Soldiers*. He obviously took a step back as a documentarist.[3]

Like Yamane, recent commentators on Kamei often compare the "subtle touch" of Kamei's wartime work with the barefaced attack in *A Japanese Tragedy.* Of course, this is precisely correct; the two are very different in approach. We can attribute this reading of the film in part to the legacy of New Left attacks on Kamei's generation, which has been perceived as an authoritarian force little different from the wartime chauvinists. In any case, this perspective also disregards the respective historical contexts of the two periods in which Kamei worked. The masterful subtlety we admire in *Fighting Soldiers* is nothing other than the trace of suppression in the wartime public discursive field; the dissolution of this pressure is evidenced in the boldness of *A Japanese Tragedy.* Put another way, Yamane and other critics decry a continuity between the wartime conventions and Kamei's style in his first postwar film, but the two are qualitatively different. The real continuity is between the noisy dissent of movements like Prokino and Kamei's reading of recent history through the images of the wartime documentary. In other words, what Yamane calls the film's "loud voice" is nothing other than the full-throated enunciation of the hidden discursive field. This is particularly obvious in the opening sequence, which goes to great lengths to explain the hardship of rural life—one of the "genres" that documentarists had used to express hidden discourses during the war—through a complex reading of Japan's industrialization and competition in an international market. Significantly, the film is structured by an unabashedly Marxist analysis of history, so in one sense the film represents the resurfacing of the Communist Party line. However, the communication and representation reserved to hidden spaces was basically a disconnected, unorganized set of discourses, and *A Japanese Tragedy* expresses these at many other levels. If this film shows none of the polish of Kamei's wartime work, it is evidence of the trembling thrill of giving voice to the anger, resentment, and sadness built up over many years. *A Japanese Tragedy* is the cinematic equivalent of Kamei's flying rice bowl.

We can also see a lack of continuity between the wartime cinema and *A Japanese Tragedy* in the later film's experimentation with documentary film style. Using the codes of the wartime cinema was out of the question,

so Kamei was forced to innovate. He recognized the compilation film's potential for experimentation through collage and created a documentary in a mode that was rare for Japanese cinema up to that time. He had the example of cannibalization in the *henshū eiga* for inspiration, but these films did little more than collect and reorder images; the images did not become collage. The filmmakers did not have Kamei's ironized relationship to the individual shots that allowed him to think at a metacritical level. It is far more likely that Kamei's model was the Soviet cinema. We do not know whether he saw Esther Shub's work while he was a student in Russia; however, her films were known in Japan as early as the Prokino movement, and, as we have seen, one of Prokino's goals was to reedit mainstream, "bourgeois" films. In fact, Iwasaki apparently attempted this for one sequence in *Asphalt Road*. In order to draw a connection between the paving of roads and military needs, he clipped an image of troops parading down a boulevard from *Navy Anniversary News* (Kaigun kinenbi nyūsu).[4] Fifteen years later, Kamei made this brand of politicized reappropriation the conceptual approach underlying *A Japanese Tragedy.*

One thing Kamei does share with the *henshū eiga* filmmakers is their instinct for appropriation, something we might liken to cannibalism. As an icon of imagined terror, cannibalism taps into a revulsion appropriate to a discussion of antiwar cinema: a fear of one's own death and victimization. Historically, cannibalism has been deployed as a hideous accusation against others, used to illustrate their "barbarism," but to address how early filmmakers pushed the news film to a new level of complexity, I wish to approach the concept of cannibalism from another perspective. In ritualistic practice, the cannibal devours the body of another to *incorporate the other's magic.* Appropriately, cannibalism has even occurred as part of ritualistic drama. It is a means of obtaining certain qualities of the consumed, an appropriation that absorbs the vitalities of another's body. The cannibal reduces the other's power while making it his or her own. Cannibalism is a trope for adaptation and appropriation in which stereotype and practice powerfully converge. That is to say, the politics of recontextualizing images from other bodies of film involves complex relationships between the new work and the "originals." As the *henshū eiga* demonstrates, it taps the power of multiple originals while diverting them to new ends, montage projects often connected to larger political agendas.

In *A Japanese Tragedy,* Kamei is clearly attracted to the power contained in images of the war, and, like the cannibal, he takes that magic and turns it to his own, novel ends. In some respects, the film resembles the "Why We Fight" series created for the U.S. war effort by Frank Capra and company. Both use footage shot by the enemy (for Kamei the enemy is both

the United States and Japan) and appropriate these images for purposes the original films' creators would never have imagined. Both Capra and Kamei use animated maps to portray the history of Japan's advance through Asia, with animated daggers plunging into China, Taiwan, and the Pacific Islands. Both use the so-called Tanaka Memorial's plan to conquer the world (a forgery, by the way) as a structuring device. And both attempt to explain the conflict in historical terms, although through very different paradigms. What finally sets the two apart is their conception of documentary. Capra's is brutally straightforward: here are documentary images of Japan's aggressive war of atrocity—the photographic image does not lie. Quite the opposite, Kamei warns his spectators that they must not trust these images; they must be witting, careful, *critical* viewers. Kamei battles two wartime attitudes that are built into the original images, conceptions of documentary manifested in the following two quotes, which come from either end of the political spectrum in very different times. From Itō Yasuo, the head of newsreel production for Nichiei (1942):

> The cameramen, the editors, all of us, intend to tenaciously face the reporting of truth. We absolutely denounce artifice for propaganda, as in foreign news films. . . . I believe we must work towards truth in Japanese news films to the bitter end. . . . Ultimately, we believe truth will lead to victory.[5]

And from Kuwano Shigeru, filmmaker for *Dōmei Geppō* (1973):

> At least, there is a fragment of the world's truth in the screen of a news film. That is the feeling I had. Of course, the photographed film was censored by the military, criticized by the Cabinet Information Board, and finally was mercilessly cut up with the scissors of the Home Ministry's Police Department. However, what was projected cut by cut had a *true* fragment of society's turbulence and suffering. Thanks to the material qualities of the camera, the smallest limit of truth has been fixed there. No matter how insanely militarists snipped their scissors, only that truth could never be plundered.[6]

A Japanese Tragedy exposes the indiscretions of the wartime cinema and points to the complicity of the news film with the making of war—no matter what kernel of truth the news film cameramen hoped their images would preserve. Kamei demands recognition of the decisive role of contextualization and conceptualization in documentary. Throughout *A Japanese Tragedy,* Kamei points to the ways history is filtered through structures of power. He focuses on the key points of mediation: newspapers, newsreels, still photography, speeches about glorious war results, and even messages relayed from the emperor. Kamei trains his spectators to become expert viewers. For example, the film contains the first postwar cannibalization of the scene (described in chapter 5) from *Nippon News No. 177* that features

the camera's dramatic tilt down the mud-spattered back of a student recruit. The narration does not explicitly tell the viewer how to read this image, but in the new context in which it is embedded, the irony produced by the clash of Tōjō's speech, that mud, and the weight of history clearly signifies tragedy.

Nowhere is this more compelling than in Kamei's critique of wartime representations of violence. In these sequences, Kamei's cannibalization of other films evokes real revulsion. Through the help of Conde, Kamei acquired the diaries of some of the Japanese soldiers who had sacked Manila, as well as moving-image records of the carnage. *A Japanese Tragedy* represents the revelation of the massacre violence the wartime media had so carefully concealed. For example, the narrator reads passages from a Japanese diary containing descriptions of orders for the evacuation of Manila; the Japanese soldiers are to kill Filipino civilians with as little effort and ammunition as possible by assembling them in the areas already designated for the disposal of corpses. Accompanying this narration are horrific images of dead Filipinos with hands bound behind their backs and piles of charred bodies. These were probably the first images of their kind to make it to Japanese screens.

Kamei also de-aestheticizes sacrifice violence with images of wasteful death. He singles out the best example of sacrifice violence: the kamikaze. An intertitle over American combat footage warns viewers that the wartime newspapers, radio, and news films reported lies, followed by the pitiful sight of kamikaze fighters from the perspective of the deck of an American ship. As each plane explodes in midair, in the foreground American sailors cheer another Japanese death. Footage from a Japanese newsreel shows fighter planes landing on the surface of the ocean while the original narration explains that the planes had run out of gas; a superimposed intertitle intervenes: "Actually, the mother ship sank, so they could not land." Elsewhere, Kamei draws on the disruptive potential of massacre violence to critique the conventions of sacrifice; he juxtaposes familiar newsreel images of Nanking—the banzai on the city walls, the victory march—with a sound track filled with the screams of women. *A Japanese Tragedy* achieves a level of recontextualizing cannibalism that has been matched only by the likes of Emile de Antonio.

The bottom line in *A Japanese Tragedy* is responsibility, the issue that frames the entire film. The first image is that of the film's title superimposed over a view of the Tokyo Trial courtroom, the defendant's chair empty and waiting to be filled. The film itself offers evidence indicting leaders of crimes against the Japanese people and humanity, and the final sequence shows former leaders—including Araki Sadao, "star" of *Japan in*

Time of Crisis—arriving at Sugamo Prison, the same prison where Iwasaki had been held. Surely this was satisfying for the producer of *A Japanese Tragedy.* In the climax of the film, however, ultimate responsibility is handed to the emperor himself. In one of Kamei's most impressive uses of montage, a wartime photograph of Hirohito, proudly sporting a military uniform festooned with medals, slowly dissolves into a postwar image of a slouched emperor in a business suit (Figure 19). This brilliant sequence would be the film's undoing.

Kyoko Hirano's excellent history of the film industry in Japan during the American occupation shows with some precision the kind of trouble *A Japanese Tragedy* met.[7] At this early point in the occupation, the official guidelines for filmmaking did not exclude criticism directed at the emperor, only criticism of the occupation itself. Even so, when Kamei and Iwasaki submitted their preproduction scenario to the American censors, it was returned with problematic sections underlined. The sections to be deleted included much of the final sequence on war responsibility:

> (Page 25—First Script)
>
> [Scene] 36. In order to re-mold Japan into a democratic, peace-loving country we have to thoroughly try those dangerous leaders in the past as well as the system which became the matrix of aggressive war. For instance, Hatoyama, until the very moment he was purged, had been telling the nation such nice words to deceive them. (Picture of Hatoyama, synchronized) "Our Liberal Party recognized the Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Association and Freedom of Economics."
>
> [Scene] 37. There are many people [who] call themselves as the leaders in the new era, changing their "fronts" like this. (Picture: Newspaper—Kyoto University Affair, Education Minister and President, Picture of Emperor, shown first in military dress, then in civilian dress). It will be very serious if we are taken [in] again.[8]

The filmmakers deleted the footage of the attack on Hatoyama but refused to take out Hirohito. They submitted a second script with the



Figure 19. *A Japanese Tragedy*: Hirohito's postwar renovation rendered with a single dissolve.

following revised narration, which they eventually used in the finished film against the montage of Hirohito:

> There are still people who are responsible for the war who forced the general public to be involved in this war of invasion, making them suffer at the depths of hunger and poverty today. Actually, during this war of invasion people who were in positions of responsibility now hurry to turn into pacifists. In order not to repeat the uncomfortable war of invasion which destroyed justice and human lives, we citizens must think about this problem seriously. In fact, finally voices rise among the people themselves, calling for war responsibility.

A Japanese Tragedy was ready for release the week of 12 July 1946, but Nichiei had problems getting the major distribution chains (Toho, Shochiku, Daiei, and Nikkatsu) to show the film. Apparently, they thought the film's length and the fact that it was a documentary meant it would fail at the box office. However, there are indications that they also disliked the subject matter. One occupation report notes that the companies refused to distribute the film for fear that hostile audiences would destroy theaters; indeed, Kamei later recalled one showing where someone threw a sandal at the screen.[9] Without the help of the studios and their distribution wings, Nichiei was forced to run its own screenings in independent theaters and halls in the Tokyo suburbs. The reactions of press and public were generally favorable, and Nichiei started publicizing a downtown Tokyo opening to take place on 15 August.

Two days before the scheduled Tokyo premiere, however, Iwasaki was called to the office of the occupation force's Civil Censorship Detachment and told that the film had been reviewed a second time and did not pass. The film was to be banned, and Iwasaki was given until 20 August to round up the negative and all the prints. Try as he might, Iwasaki never received an honest justification for the suppression. However, documents from the time reveal that the film was caught in the midst of powerful forces. Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru had heard about the film and arranged for a screening with American intelligence officers present, so he could communicate his outrage personally. Yoshida pushed the Americans to ban the film. Among the leaders of the occupation force, an honest debate ensued over how to balance the importance of the right of free speech with the occupying army's need to maintain order. In the end, the decision went against Kamei and Iwasaki. Both filmmakers, who had been victimized by the violent power plays of the Japanese government during the war, were liberated only to find themselves enslaved by new forces. They sloughed off one set of public conventions only to find themselves subject to new ones: the geopolitical terror of the anti-Communist Cold War and the continuing regulation of representations of the emperor.[10]

"Suddenly There Was an Emptiness": *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki*

There is something peculiar about the still photographs taken amid the remains of what had been the bustling cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Yamahata Yōsuke wandered through the devastation of Nagasaki with his camera on 10 August, the day after the attack.[11] Although Yamahata was a battle photographer and had collected images at the Southeast Asian front, the photographs he took that day look as though he was unsure how to go about photographing the battlefield of atomic warfare. The horizon is often tilted, as if the whole world is askew. Many of the photographs seem to be about nothing in particular or about rubble. The occasional snapshot shows the inexplicable: a scrap of something hanging high in a tree, a dead horse underneath a carriage, a body burned beyond recognition. The people in the photographs seem to defy "proper" composition. They inhabit the edges of the frame, looking out to the spaces beyond the camera's viewfinder—although it is obvious there is nothing in particular there for them to look at. Nagasaki is gone. The composition of the photos always seems to miss its mark, as though Yamahata literally had no idea how to frame his experience.

Then there are the panoramas, which represent a formal confluence between the still photographs and the motion pictures shot immediately after the bombings. All of the image collectors were drawn to the panorama. The still photographers stitched their frames together into atomic "cinemascope"; the cinematographers simply panned and panned, often in complete circles. Their experience of standing in the midst of such total devastation put enormous pressure on the composition itself. How could someone stand in the middle of a flattened city and not sweep the lens over its breadth like a magic wand, trying to make it all manageable, to harness that experience in a camera movement? Viewing these images, one feels a struggle between the cameramen's efforts to bring their experience (and thus their photography) under their own control and something larger that threatens to do it for them. This is the drama that played out in the production of the first major documentary of the postwar period: *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. In the vacuum left by the obliteration of the public codes, the filmmakers of Nichiei took an approach that was very different from Kamei's. Instead of the full-throated purging of anger, they opted for the ideology-less, objective pose of the science film, a choice with great consequences, considering the pressing moral implications of their subject matter.

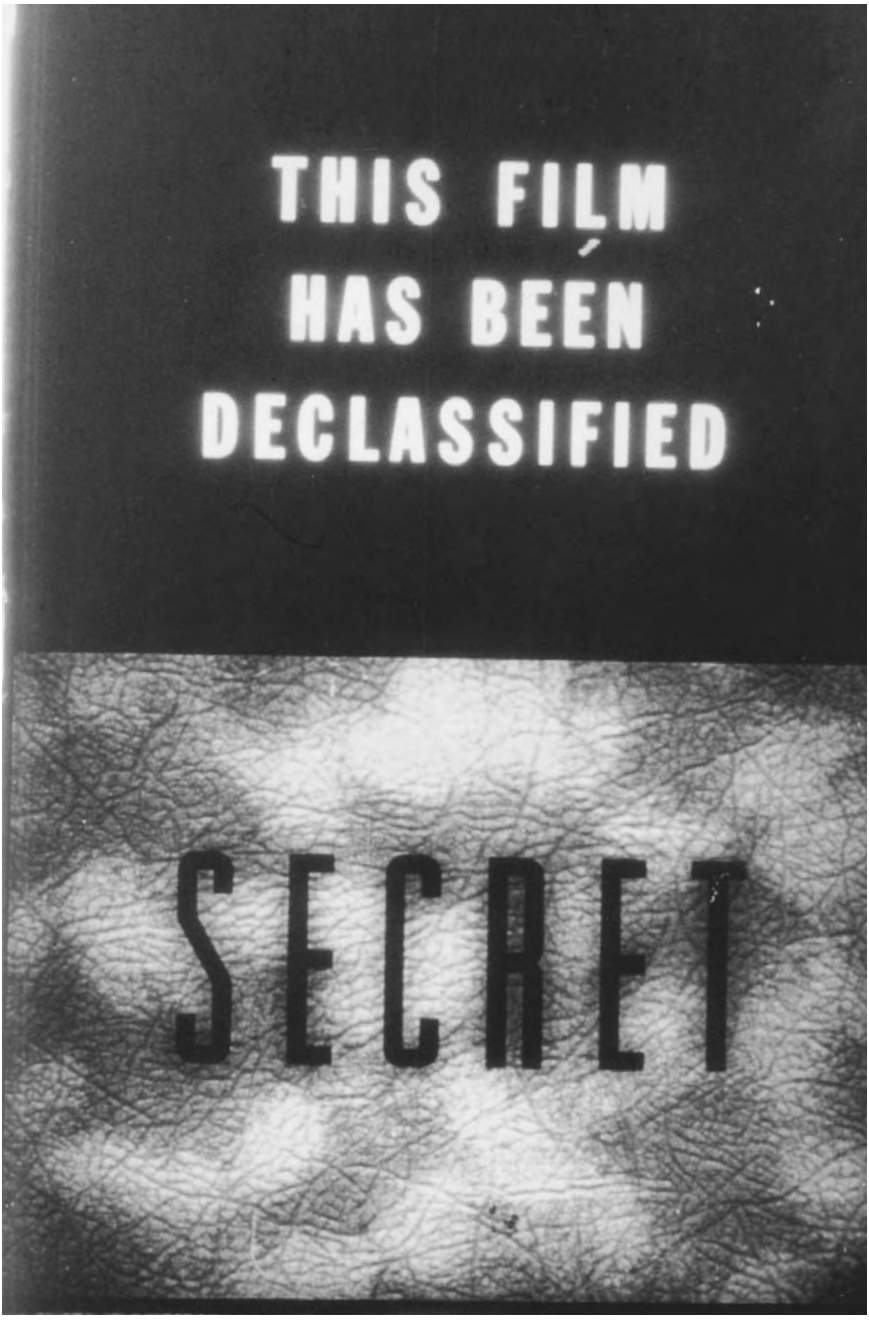


Figure 20. Traces of a complicated history in the leader of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.*

The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is a mysterious film in every way.[12] For decades it was known in Japan as the *maboroshi* atomic bomb film; *maboroshi* loosely translates as "phantom" and is used to describe an object whose existence is known but whose location remains a mystery. The shadowy presence of such an object tugs on the mind. In fact, this film came close—on many occasions—to a very real nonexistence. Production on the film was stopped and resumed by the American military, subsumed and redirected by both Japanese and American governments; the finished film was confiscated on several occasions, suppressed and lost for decades, censored by the Japanese government, and defiantly repatriated by common Japanese citizens.

The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki has a complex history that is closely intertwined with the postwar experience of Japan. Simply described, it is a science documentary, two hours and forty-five minutes in length, about the aftermath of the atomic bombings. Shot in 1945 and finished in the first months of 1946, it represents the first full-fledged documentary on the atomic bomb attacks.[13] However, its meaning expands far beyond this. Since surfacing from its *maboroshi* existence, it has been picked apart and appropriated by countless filmmakers and writers in feature films, documentaries, books, magazines, and television reports. Images from the film have even been converted into other media, such as still photography, animation, and the special effects of feature films. These appropriations have turned *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* into the source of many of humanity's images of and icons for atomic warfare. Had the suppression of this film been successful, every single other film about the bombings would be different. More important, our very memory of the events would be radically altered. In this sense, we can say that *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* is important for helping us to understand the dimension of the human tragedy of the attacks—ironic for a film often described as "an accumulation of scientific facts [that] eliminates the human factor altogether."[14]

Those who have described the film in this way refer to the cold, scientific tone from which the documentary never wavers, an astoundingly insensitive treatment of its subject matter that makes its already complicated history even more confusing. There are both claims and accusations regarding the film's authorship. Upset viewers and historians want to blame the film's inhuman, scientific approach on the victorious Americans and the occupation. Cinematographers (and their biographers) want to take credit for recording the film's epochal images while emphasizing their distance from the contextualization rendered in postproduction.[15] The filmmakers closest to positions of power and responsibility reveal a much more nuanced

perspective. All these versions clash at different points, creating gaps and fissures that make the messiness of history emerge in force. In the end, the film leaves the troubling reality of two atomic bombs and an overwhelmingly contradictory discourse from which to look back and survey the chaos—a precarious tripod, to be sure. Before I examine the film and its recontextualizations, I want to address how each twist and turn in the course of production deeply affected the very shape of the film and how it has been interpreted.

Part of this history's messiness derives from the sheer difficulty of writing about the bomb; all representations of the atomic bombings face the specter of *impossibility*. This problematic appears insurmountable for historians today, so far removed from the experience of the attack. If there is anything striking about the historical record of the atomic bomb film, it is the reticence of historians to write; instead, they rely on the memories of those with firsthand experience. Facing the failure of their tools of representation, they—we—turn to those with direct experience, those whose relationship to the attacks is not already mediated by others in the first place, whether it be through written texts, sounds, images, or even the shadow of a human being etched in stone. There is a desire to let those with direct experience speak. This decision to defer to the apparent authority of these texts also exposes a need to commit the personal experience to public memory. This is invariably history-in-the-first-person, for there is something about the Epicenter—what is there—that always converts narration into *testimony.* When historians have reprocessed these contentious testimonies into narrative, they have had to smooth out the contradictions, leading to quiet distortion for the sake of a sense of completeness. By way of contrast, a textual patchwork of these first-person histories will preserve some degree of the complexity of the film's tangled production history. More important, these individual narratives make the multiple points of view bearing on these nineteen reels of sound and image palpable. As the first quote below seems to suggest, they ultimately suggest motives ranging from the humanistic condemnation of atomic warfare to an attempt to take action against the enemy even in defeat.

The day after a single plane attacked Nagasaki, discussions for a documentary began at Nichiei, one of the few production companies still in existence at the end of the war. Film director Itō Sueo describes the discussions in his memoirs:

> On 10 August 1945, I was in the Culture Film Unit of Nippon Eigasha in Tokyo's Ginza. Shimomura Masao and Uriu Tadao from the our News Unit came to see me. We talked about the damage from the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August and Nagasaki on 9 August, news of which had

been coming in from the Dōmei Tsūshinsha desk. They said that this disastrous scene ought to be recorded; simply put, they suggested we appeal to the world by communicating the inhuman facts through the International Red Cross in Geneva. I agreed, and finally spoke with producer Kanō Ryūichi, director of the Culture Film Unit Tanaka, and Production Chief Iwasaki. They agreed. However, five days later on 15 August, the surrender of Japan was announced and the possibility of appealing to the world through the International Red Cross disappeared.[16]

With the end of the war, government production capital dried up and whatever funds remained were devoted to survival. Despite the uncertain future of the company, the intention of making a documentary to reveal the destruction of the bomb to the world remained strong at Nichiei. Discussions continued, and the head of planning, Aihara Hideji, took a proposal wherever he went. At the beginning of September, Toho's Mori Iwao and Yamanashi Minoru from Eigahaikyūsha met the president of Nichiei, Negishi Kan'ichi, and asked why Nichiei was not making an atomic bomb documentary. Negishi called in Aihara and explained the plans Nichiei had already developed, as well as the studio's money problem. Through the quick efforts of Toho and Eigahaikyūsha, Nichiei arranged for somewhat informal financing. With a budget in place, Iwasaki Akira (head of production) and Kanō Ryūichi (producer) worked feverishly on preproduction while director Itō set out for Hiroshima and Nagasaki to pave the way for the arrival of the film crew.

On 7 September 1945, I put three days' worth of rice in a rucksack and departed Tokyo alone. I had been informed about the harmfulness of radioactivity, so I flinched when I got off at Hiroshima Station in the middle of a field whose entire surface was burned. First, it took a day to push the prefectural and city offices. I talked with them about food and the construction of housing for the film crews to follow, but they had their hands full with relief for surviving citizens and took no notice of me. I was consuming the rice I had brought and feared I would simply starve, so I put off Hiroshima until later . . . and went to my home in Nagasaki prefecture. . . . I contacted Nichiei's home office in Tokyo. As a result, I discovered from the Tokyo home office that the plans for the shooting of the atomic bomb film had taken a big change of course. Nippon Eigasha's independent photography would stop, and acting together with the Special Committee to Study the Damage of the Atomic Bomb formed by the Education Ministry, we would shoot the contents of their investigation. . . . Shooting would begin in Hiroshima, and after finishing there move to Nagasaki. Because lost time was precious, I insisted on beginning to shoot in Nagasaki. The home office decided it was all right to begin photography with cameraman Kurita Kurotada from the Fukushima branch, but later assistant director Mizuno Hajime and assistant cameraman Sekiguchi Toshio would be sent from Tokyo.[17]

The fate of the film had taken a decisive change of course back in Tokyo. Producer Kanō Ryūichi later recalled:

> At the time we worked out our action plan for photography, the Education Ministry's Gakujutsu Kenkyūkaigi also established the Special Committee to Study the Damage of the Atomic Bomb (14 September). It was decided that the various groups would begin their investigatory activities. We (five units, with a thirty-three person film crew) were to act together with the committee's scientists, and we also received the cooperation of many of the scholars in the photography. That is to say, the film unit often took their management of transportation and the construction of lodging. Then during shooting we contacted each other to find objects for data collection that seemed like potential scientific material. We went in the same three trucks and cars from the lodging to the epicenter every day. . . . the reason that I write this is that it is important to make clear what it was like in those days. Some say the Education Ministry had us make the film; others say we were directed by the research teams. . . . Of course, Nichiei bore the cost of production. Moreover, the film stock was provided by Nichiei. As for the fact of American provisions, outside of some special photography, there was none at all.[18]

On 15 September, the Nichiei film crews headed for Hiroshima, accompanying the scientists of the Education Ministry's investigation team. They began their shoot despite rumors about radiation effects, and the photography proceeded smoothly. Most fears were imaginary; Aihara later told an interviewer: "I couldn't shoot more than half of what I wanted to. There was always this struggle over whether I should shoot this or not. That was my own problem, my impression at that time. Inside, there was the problem of exposing military secrets, an awful feeling as if I were benefiting the enemy."[19]

However, other members of the production team were absorbed in their own thoughts as they hauled heavy equipment across the remains of Hiroshima. Kikuchi Shū, second camera assistant for cinematographer Miki Shigeru, has described the experience:

> We started from the epicenter. . . . Here and there across the city were corpses. Wooden homes were completely crushed and burned. The only shapes remaining were buildings reinforced with steel and iron frames. . . . Miki would walk quickly—*sutakora sutakora*—to some far-off place until his body would become small. He would boom out, "Hey, over here, over here," and we followed along as best we could. . . . We were shocked by the shadow of a handrail burned onto Bandai Bridge, as well as the clearly carved shadow of human beings walking on the bridge. This had to be a characteristic of the atomic bomb. One day, I think we were shooting at Hiroshima Castle, and we came upon the "corpse of a horse" and remembered *Fighting Soldiers*. All over the place there were what seemed to be shadows of human bodies; it left quite an impression. . . . About twenty days passed. Kaneko Hoji and I packed up the

exposed film and took it back to Nichiei's home office in Tokyo. Miki took the Palbo camera, large-format still camera, and tripod, and set out for Nagasaki.[20]

Back in Tokyo, Iwasaki and Kanō watched the rushes as they came in from Hiroshima; Iwasaki later recalled, "Every frame burned into my brain."[21] While the teams of scientists and cinematographers worked in Hiroshima, Itō had been on his own in Nagasaki.

> Shooting started on 16 September. We were most concerned with the effects *[eikyō]* on human bodies. Because more than a month had already passed since the bombing, the corpses had all been dealt with. Most victims were staying in the hospitals of nearby cities, towns, and villages. . . . We got to know some victims while shooting, and days later when we called on them, they were already gone. Corpses were carried down to basement rooms. It was a terrible scene we would want to look away from. . . . I diligently walked and shot what was left among the burned fields. With the coming of October, people from the units that had finished shooting in Hiroshima gradually came to Nagasaki. I was put in the physical structures unit, but did not participate and continued to photograph according to my own plan.[22]

Along with the scientists and film crews, the military occupation also arrived in Nagasaki. The investigations, data collection, and photography proceeded smoothly until 24 October, when Sekiguchi Toshio, Itō's assistant cameraman, found himself at the center of an incident that once again radically changed the course of the film. He later recalled:

> It was around here . . . there were plants coming up in the burned area. This was unusual so I was taking a close-up with my Eyemo [a tiny 35mm camera used for combat photography on both sides of the front lines]. While I was shooting, an MP came up. He asked, "What are you doing?" and things like that. I told him I was shooting the burned areas. "By whose order?" he asked. I told him I was with staff from Nichiei which was shooting a documentary film on the atomic bombing with Dr. Nishina. Taking me away, he had quite a look on his face. I was led over there to talk with someone, I do not remember the name, but they had translators and it was quite friendly. Then I was brought back to the previous place. They confiscated film, too. I had been shooting still photos with a Leica. They asked, "What's this?" I replied, "I've been shooting the burned area." They told me to take out all the film.[23]

Itō had been off searching for locations with cameraman Kurida during this time, and did not hear Sekiguchi's story until later:

> That night communication from the Nichiei home office in Tokyo came in to the Dōmei Tsūshinsha Nagasaki Branch Office: Photography was suspended by order of the occupation forces. On 27 October, a command came from the Nagasaki Communications Office of the American military for a shooting

> supervisor to report to their office in Katsuyama public school. I went with Aihara, the planning supervisor for the physical sections. In the school principal's office, which was being used as the commander's office, we had a long conversation through a Japanese American translator with a pistol sitting on the desk. In conclusion, filming was canceled. All personnel were evacuated. It was decided that everyone would return to Tokyo.[24]

By the time shooting was interrupted, Nichiei filmmakers had exposed twenty-six thousand feet of film covering all aspects of the bombing. Everyone knew there were bureaucratic movements afoot to either stop or confiscate their project, but the players were ultimately unclear. The filmmakers and scientists held a meeting in a Tokyo University classroom on 11 November to discuss strategy. No one knew precisely where the orders were coming from. No one could say with confidence that it was the Americans. In any case, they decided to develop their footage starting the following day and to begin the editing process. They also created a strategy to continue the location photography. Nishina was to visit Monbusho with Aihara with a screenplay in hand. Aihara wrote *Nagasaki no Hoshano* (The radioactivity in Nagasaki) overnight, thinking that it was a subject for a film that anyone would want to see completed. He passed the screenplay on to Kanō, but their efforts came to nothing shortly thereafter. As late as 23 November, they were having meetings with Nishina about editing; however, Nishina's cyclotron was dismantled and dumped into Tokyo Bay on 24 November, signaling a new stage in American concern over things atomic and effectively halting the film's postproduction.[25]

The photography was nearly complete, but the filmmakers were on the verge of losing everything. In the course of shooting, members of the U.S. Surgeon General's Joint Commission for the Investigation of the Effects of the Atomic Bomb bumped into one of the crews in a Hiroshima hospital and became aware of the film—and they wanted it. One of the doctors in this group, Averill Liebow, had a keen interest in the footage. In his published diary—a semisurreal account of the effects of the bomb from the point of view of a pathologist—the doctor records a deceptively disinterested account of his relationship to the film:

> I was also informed that a documentary film had been prepared at Hiroshima by the Nippon Eigasha in late 1945, but this had not been completely developed. After much discussion with Messrs. Kobayama *[sic]* and Aihara of that company, the film was developed and on December 19 it was viewed in the Surgeon General's Office. As expected, it was a remarkable record. Its possible use for propaganda purposes was not difficult to visualize. . . . A copy was retained and sent to the United States for use by the American component of the Joint Commission.[26]

In fact, the situation was somewhat less benign. Aihara distrusted Liebow's intense interest and ignored the doctor's many messages.[27] At the same time Iwasaki Akira was negotiating with the leaders of the occupation, Liebow was pursuing the film through official channels with memos to GHQ asking for the film's confiscation on the behalf of the surgeon general; Liebow: "1. Request that motion picture films concerning Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the possession of Nippon Eigasha be procured for the Atomic Bomb Commission of this office. . . . 3. These films, which were made beginning late in August 1945, are said to contain much documentary medical material of great importance to the Atomic Bomb Commission."[28] Although one would not know it from his diaries, Liebow's efforts resulted in the first confiscation of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. On 17 December, Nichiei received an order to bring the film to occupation headquarters the next day; it was to be sent to the Surgeon General's Office as per Liebow's request.

On 18 December, Kanō Ryūichi and others brought the film to the Americans, but they made an impassioned plea to keep the footage and finish their film. They argued that only they could understand what the footage was in the first place. The officer in charge considered their request and called in Daniel McGovern for consultation. Earlier that fall, the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS) arrived on Japanese soil to investigate the results of Allied bombing raids on the home islands, and this included the attacks on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Among the USSBS staff was McGovern, an army–air force cinematographer who had shot William Wyler's *Memphis Belle*. He was to make a visual record for the survey. While McGovern was in Nagasaki, a Nichiei employee approached him and explained the filmmakers' troubles with GHQ. Reasoning that it would be a waste of resources to duplicate Nichiei's work, the USSBS joined negotiations for the film. After getting the phone call about the freshly delivered footage, McGovern came over from a nearby building to participate in the discussion with the Japanese filmmakers. He agreed with the Nichiei argument and suggested that he manage the project. The American officials consented and put him in charge. The Japanese thought that this decided things.[29] Little did they know a power struggle had just begun between Liebow and McGovern.

At this point, the historical record turns from the memoirs of the filmmakers to internal memoranda that passed between offices of the American military. In a flurry of screenings, meetings, and memos, the fate of the film was decided (for the time being). Both the Surgeon General's Office and the USSBS were asking for control over the unedited rushes. The representative of the Surgeon General's Office asked that "the entire negative"

be forwarded to the Washington headquarters of the surgeon general, "in view of the fact that medical aspects are of foremost importance," a suspicious claim considering the fact that the medical portion amounted to a mere six thousand feet of film, and the Surgeon General's Office already had a positive copy of this footage.[30] At the same time, McGovern offered an argument that Iwasaki had been making ever since shooting was halted:

> In its present form this heterogeneous mass of photographic material is practically valueless, despite the fact that the conditions under which it was taken will not be duplicated, until another atomic bomb is released under combat conditions. Several weeks will be required properly to edit, cut, caption this material in such a manner that it will have a scientific value as atomic bomb research material. The only individuals qualified to do this work are the cameramen who exposed the film, the individuals who were members of the Japanese research party, and able translators working in conjunction with the Nippon Newsreel Co.[31]

On 2 January 1946, representatives from the U.S. Naval Technical Mission to Japan (NAVTECHJAP), G-2, USSBS, and the Surgeon General's Office met and decided that NAVTECHJAP would help Nichiei complete location photography and the USSBS would supervise Nichiei's postproduction. The Surgeon General's Office would receive a new work print of the eight thousand feet of medical film, most of which it already possessed. This meeting was actually the most crucial juncture in the history of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki*. The decision to allow Nichiei to finish the film for the USSBS meant the Surgeon General's Office would lose its claim and receive only unedited rushes. That footage is now *maboroshi*; had the decision weighed in the favor of the American doctors, it is likely Nichiei's moving images of the atomic bombings would have been lost forever. As the following discussion makes clear, the ideological positions of individuals within the powerful institutions involved translated into decisive twists and turns in the story of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki*.

After this narrow miss, GHQ officially directed the USSBS to manage and fund Nichiei's postproduction under the supervision of McGovern and Dan Dyer. Ironically, Dyer had been chief target analyst for Major General LeMay's superfortress squadrons and had been in charge of target selection at the end of the war—presumably the targets selected included Hiroshima and Nagasaki. GHQ also ordered the "confiscation" and shipping of all materials to the Pentagon.[32] On 11 January, a memo to Iwasaki officially directed Nichiei to finish the film and asked for a complete budget for "services rendered," including all materials, expenses, labor, and still photography. The memo also contained the following provision:

> All caption material and research matter will be included and also all short ends and excess negative will be put in containers and marked with a number. . . . All phases of the picture, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the medical section will be completed and ready for turning over to the USSBS Motion Picture Project on or before 1 March 1946. . . . No other organization will be permitted to confiscate or remove the material from the Nippon Newsreel Company.[33]

This memo, which shocked the Japanese filmmakers, has achieved considerable notoriety in the history of Japanese cinema.[34] In fact, multiple versions of the incident have circulated over the past fifty years. Many writers—Nichiei filmmakers and historians alike—describe a scenario months later, near the end of postproduction, in which Nichiei is suddenly informed that every scrap of evidence of the film is to be turned over. Some histories describe the signing of an oath of silence. Nearly all of them suggest an atmosphere of oppression. This memo to Iwasaki at the beginning of postproduction suggests that these stories are somewhat inflated.[35]

Be that as it may, the word *confiscation (bosshū)* meant something quite different to each side. In the world of the American military, it was hardly unusual vocabulary; it meant picking up services rendered from Nichiei.[36] From the perspective of the Japanese filmmakers, this *bosshū* was akin to theft. After all, much of the film had been shot and developed with Japanese money before the Americans arrived on the scene. They reasoned they at least deserved a copy, and naturally feared their film would never see the light of a projector once in the possession of the American military. As Itō later recalled, "When the confiscation order was issued, I thought this inevitably meant that the material would never be returned."[37]

The Nichiei filmmakers edited the footage and recorded an English-language sound track. American MPs were stationed outside the editing room doors at the Meiji Building in Hibiya (although three other units were left to their own devices at the home office). The staff kept asking the producers if there was nothing they could do to prevent the confiscation. Kanō later remembered saying to them:

> Don't you have to agree without resistance that all the film of the atomic bomb film would be taken away without a trace? . . . Anyway, quickly, we made arrangements to secretly preserve one rush print. In order to proceed with complete secrecy it was crucial that this be accomplished through only a few hands. We thought about that. When film production nears the completion stage, it is complicated and rushed. Around this time, errors can be made. That's it. With a voucher request to the laboratory, a duplicate could be made by mistake. Iwasaki, Kanō, Itō, and Matsuda from the production desk: only these four people knew this mistake.[38]

Itō has described what happened next:

> This print was placed in the lab operated by Miki Shigeru, who had retired from Nichiei. We never made the situation clear to him. Those days, people going against orders of the occupation forces were assigned to hard labor in Guam or Okinawa as punishment. The four of us agreed to be ready for ten years of hard labor in the case of being discovered.[39]

This quiet, courageous act of defiance assured that moving images of the atomic bombings would be preserved for future generations, no matter what happened to the materials the filmmakers were about to hand over to the American military. This act has been called "the moral equivalent to vengeance"—yet another intimation that the film was a continuation of the war—and the filmmakers have even been compared to the forty-seven *ronin* of *Chūshingura*.[40] The incomplete, silent print remained in Miki Shigeru's possession until the end of the occupation; rumors about it circulated in the Japanese film world, but the filmmakers were never arrested for what they had done.[41]

They were, however, caught. McGovern knew they had kept a print for themselves, but looked the other way. He was happy with their finished film, felt it was the Japanese filmmakers' work, and thought it only appropriate that a copy remain in Japan.[42] Furthermore, although the Japanese filmmakers were correct in their greatest fears—the film was destined to become *maboroshi* in the hands of the U.S. government—they misunderstood the intentions of the USSBS. The "confiscation" did not mean "suppression"—yet.

The first preview was held on 4 May 1946 for military personnel. Douglas MacArthur was scheduled to attend, but disappointed everyone by failing to show. A second partial screening of the film that was held on 7 May has far more historical significance. Kanō Ryūichi and the other Nichiei filmmakers knew about it, but did not realize its implications.[43] McGovern was convinced that Americans should see the destruction caused by their atomic bombs. He liked the Nichiei film and had grand plans for its wide release in the United States. To pave the way, he arranged for a Tokyo screening, paying the expenses out of his own pocket. He invited foreign correspondents to create advance publicity back home. Mark Gayn, the *Chicago Sun* correspondent and author of *Japan Diary,* filed a story with detailed descriptions of the film, including the budget.[44] Meanwhile, Nichiei reluctantly packed seven wooden boxes with the photographs, film, and negative, and delivered them to the Americans.

Back in the United States, McGovern started distribution negotiations with Warner Bros. and began making arrangements for official permission

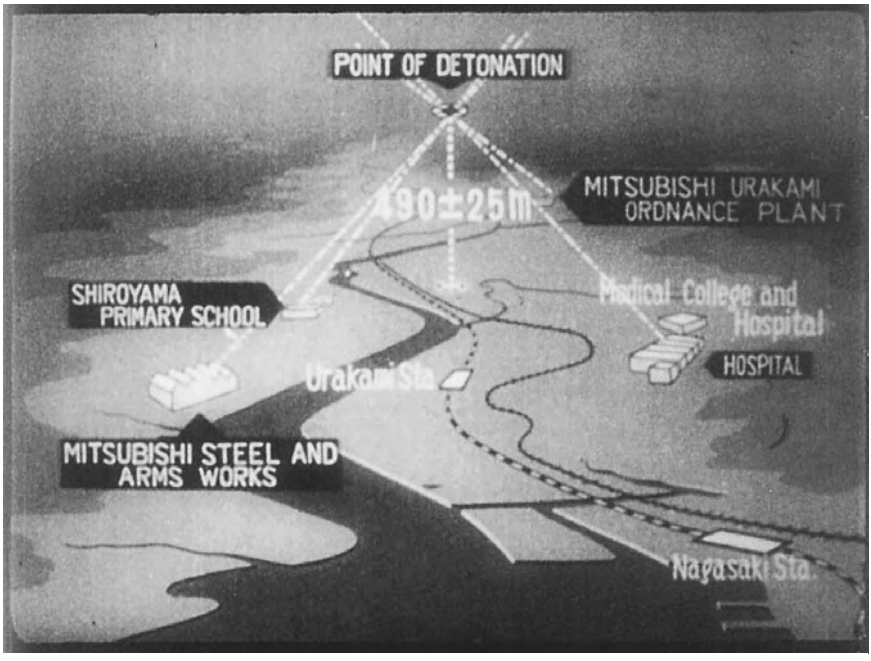


Figure 21. Triangulating the Hypocenter using atomic shadows—the cause of the first suppression.

to distribute the film. A screening attended by Pentagon officers, public relations specialists, and representatives from the Manhattan Project was held at the U.S. Navy Science Lab in Anacostia, Maryland. At the end of the screening, the Manhattan Project people raised objections to the public release of the film on the grounds that it included information about the height at which the bombs had been detonated. The diligent filmmakers and scientists had triangulated atomic shadows to make their calculations and had come within fifty feet of the correct altitude. As a result, the film was classified "Secret RD."[45] Today it is difficult to believe this suppression was not motivated by the same fears expressed by Dr. Liebow. In the "wrong" hands, this footage could serve ends of which the U.S. government would not approve. However, this does not explain why a few of the most violent images were subsequently released to Paramount studios and used in *Paramount News* to accompany images of the explosions on Bikini. In any case, the film, negative, and photographs were confiscated one more time, only this time it seemed to be for keeps. The fate of this material remained unknown, *maboroshi,* until 1994.[46]

This was precisely what McGovern feared. Like his Japanese colleagues, he undermined the power structures that were putting pressure on the film. In an act of resistance as courageous as that of the Nichiei

filmmakers, he struck a 16mm composite print of the film and quietly deposited it at the U.S. Air Force Central Film Depository at Wright Air Force Base. Had he obeyed his orders, we might today have only the silent, incomplete reels that were hidden in Tokyo. Both attempts to obstruct the film's suppression are impressive. However, their consequences have been very different: whereas the Nichiei print has been continually suppressed one way or another, the McGovern print ended up as public-domain material deposited in the U.S. National Archives, one of the most accessible film archives in the world.[47]

The film left in the wake of this bewildering, serpentine story—*The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki*—is an epic that minutely investigates the destruction wrought by the two atomic attacks. Although it was initially conceived as an appeal to the world to recognize the horror of the bombs and the tragedy of their victims, the final film *seems to appeal to no one in particular.* It is a cold, hard examination of the effects of the bombs from a ruthlessly scientific point of view. The bulk of the film is devoted to buildings and plant life. The images of human beings have been disparagingly, and quite appropriately, compared to police mug shots.[48] Some writers have pointed to the nearly obscene selection of music, which is a bright classical orchestral score, much of it with Christian connotations.[49] Thus in the end it would seem the American supervision overpowered the intentions of the Japanese filmmakers. This has been the assumption of almost everyone who has seen the film, but a closer reading reveals markers that throw this conclusion into doubt. Indeed, the Americans entered the production near the completion of location photography, and few historians have considered the plans under which the shooting actually took place. Determining the responsibility for the film's "inhuman approach" is far from simple.

The complexity underlying the assumptions of "authorship" are condensed in the issue of the film's title and its translation into Japanese. As we have seen in the preceding chapters, issues of power always circulate around the practice of translation between languages and their cultures. Because translation is the medium through which all communication with the other must pass, close examination of a given translation act will reveal much about the larger dynamics at work. The film title *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* was rendered into Japanese as *Hiroshima, Nagasaki ni Okeru Genshibakudan no Kōka.* This appears to be a simple, direct translation; however, its last word has proven extremely controversial. *Kōka* may be translated as "effects," but it also means "results." Thus the Japanese title strongly implies that the people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were used as guinea pigs in a cruel experiment. The author

of this translation is unknown, but Japanese have automatically attributed it to the victor of the war. They have taken the title to be powerfully emblematic of the callous attitude expressed in the film. For example, Kogawa Tetsuo argues: "From the beginning [the Americans] openly used the word *kōka,* and by using this title they had already decided that they were not going to depict human beings as human beings. As the title indicates, they are mere research material."[50] Writing in the turbulent 1960s, when the film was still *maboroshi,* Noda Shinkichi speculated that the title had to have been attached by the Americans. His suspicions got the better of him, and he made a telling slip at the end of his article: instead of *kōka,* he substituted *seika,* or "fruits" (of one's labor).[51] The ugly irony that this mistranslation injects into the title reveals Noda's rage at the Americans. Just as telling is an incident that occurred when the McGovern print was returned to the Education Ministry in 1967. The ministry changed the last word of the title translation from *kōka* to *eikyō* (influence). Although *eikyō* can imply "effect," it was really meant to remove the impression of experimentation and introduce a vague, even metaphysical, feeling to the title. The Education Ministry intentionally designed its translation to create a misreading of the film; nervous about their own complicity with the original project, ministry officials even diffused their credit, cut out all the scenes of human suffering, and to this day allow no one to see the print except "medical researchers." In contrast, Noda's unintentional mistake exposes his anger at the Americans and their callous attitude. Finally, in 1994 a citizens' movement organized by director Hani Susumu and many others began raising money to create a Japanese-language version of the film, which they renamed *Hiroshima, Nagasaki ni okeru genshibakudan no saigai*; *saigai* translates as "disaster."[52] Like Noda, Kogawa, and pretty much every spectator since the end of the war, they reread the title and the strange science film itself as a further victimization of the citizens of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

However, before accepting this attribution of cinematic aggression, one must turn back to the issue of translation. Japanese commentators have treated the words *kōka* and *effect* as interchangeable, as having a one-to-one correspondence in meaning. However, native English speakers would be hesitant to reduce the meaning of "effect of the bomb" to "result of an experiment." Although there is certainly truth to the claim that the bombings were to some degree spurious experiments, this is not necessarily implied by the "effects" of the film's title. Furthermore, to a native English speaker, "influence of the bomb" would seem to refer to the sociopolitical ramifications of the attacks as opposed to some vague metaphysics. Around the English word *effect* spins a tangled Japanese critical discourse informed

by mistranslation and misunderstanding, exposing a dynamic of presumption and projection. In this sense, it is a discursive continuation of the war and its hidden codes over the supposed breach of 1945.

This body of sound and image is shrouded by high-running passions and a mass of contradiction, all in tune with the quality of Japan-U.S. relations at a given moment in history. Examples abound. Noda—a leftist filmmaker and the most suspicious of our "translators"—wrote at the height of the controversy concerning the Security Treaty, or Ampo, when massive protests were held in an attempt to prevent reconfirmation of the U.S.-Japan military relationship. At about the same time, the Education Ministry arbitrarily changed the film's title because of the Japanese government's sensitivity toward foreign relations and probably its own policies (public and otherwise) concerning nuclear power, nuclear arms, and the war in Vietnam. In the 1980s, Kudō Miyoko was inspired to write her biography of cameraman Harry Mimura out of anger when she misunderstood the 1940s English in the film's narration; she presumed that a reference to "primitive hospitals" implied that Americans considered the Japanese to be barbarians.[53] Tanikawa Yoshio suspected that only ulterior, political motives could explain why only a 16mm print was returned to Japan and not the original 35mm negative, and why it was returned to the conservative Education Ministry rather than Nichiei.[54] Some historians refer to Sekiguchi's interrogation in Nagasaki—which he describes in the quotation above as "friendly"—as an arrest.[55] Monica Braw quotes an interview with Itō in which he claims there were "arrests"; however, this contradicts his autobiography and his own discussions with me, suggesting a misunderstanding on Braw's part.[56] Blame for the insensitive attitude of the film, along with its suppression, is often displaced onto the USSBS supervisors. The "confiscation" is dramatically inflated, with descriptions of the presence of MPs and the like.[57] Actually, Mimura formed lasting friendships with his American colleagues, and both Itō and McGovern have characterized their relationship as friendly and professional.[58] When asked in 1991 if the Americans interfered with the work of the Nichiei staff at any point, Itō replied: "Absolutely not. I think it was probably the same for the others. I don't remember hearing that kind of story from either Iwasaki or Kanō. It was shot freely the way we wanted to."[59]

Ironic and unfathomable though it may be, *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* is, in all its inhumanity, *a Japanese film*. When one pushes through all the suspicions and analyzes the film itself, one finds that there are different perspectives that reveal much about both this particular documentary and all "atomic cinema."

Once one acknowledges that *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* was produced according to the plan of Japanese filmmakers, the film looks less and less mysterious. Affinities between this film and other documentaries of the past suddenly appear, and it becomes possible to see the Nichiei effort as consistent with long-standing practices of documentary filmmaking in Japan. Only two of the filmmakers had been full-fledged directors before the end of the war. Itō was known for films with, in the words of Noda, a "structural hardness."[60] Okuyama Dairokurō learned filmmaking with Ōta Nikichi, the pioneer of the *kagaku eiga,* or science film. The *kagaku eiga,* the genre deployed in the atomic bomb film, represented the extreme end of the approach that makes the direct, scientific representation of reality an uncompromising value. Originally patterned after the German *Kulturfilme,* the *kagaku eiga* took a peculiar developmental course in Japan, showing a penchant for accumulating data without processing it for larger meaning. For example, *Bomb Blast and Shrapnel* is a *kagaku eiga* that shows striking similarities to *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.* Made toward the end of the Pacific War, when relatively few *kagaku eiga* were in production, the film ostensibly warns viewers of the danger of bomb blast. In reality, it is an exhaustive (and exhausting) investigation of the effects of different kinds of bombs. Wood panels, paper screens, and different varieties of domestic animals are arranged in concentric circles around bombs of various tonnage. One by one the bombs blast away, and the film surveys the damage in minute detail. Needless to say, the explosions themselves are the only exciting part of this investigation. *Bomb Blast and Shrapnel* feels in retrospect like a trial run for *The Effects of the Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.* The continuity between the two films in terms of style and conception is undeniable.

The difference, of course, is the object—of the bombs and of the filmmaking. The initial object of the Nichiei film, which was to be sent to the world through the International Red Cross, seems to have come from a variety of impulses, from a humanist sense of shock and outrage to a desire to engage the (former) enemy. It was with the entry of the Education Ministry and its investigation that the film's object became something quite different, something far more complicated and difficult to uncover. The filmmakers assumed the perspective of their academic colleagues. Perhaps they even welcomed science as a crutch for comprehending the devastation they faced. In any case, we may still see the tension between the two attitudes in one of the few extant Japanese documents connected to the film, the shooting log of Miki Shigeru's second camera assistant, Kikuchi Shū:

1. Mr. Chitani. Bombed within the 104th military, 900 meters east of the epicenter. Military clothes, right hand bandaged, rays hit from behind, ten days after bombing showed signs of atomic bomb sickness. Medium level of hair loss, bleeding gums, blood spots, rest and recuperation. White blood count after one month 1,400, burns relatively light. (At Hiroshima Army Hospital Ujishina Clinic)
2. Name unknown, twenty-six-year-old male. Bombed near epicenter at weapons section of Chugoku Military District, burns extend over wide area, hair loss, diarrhea, forty degree fever. In film scene, lies sleeping on side, burns and thinning body, pitiful, it's thought survival is difficult. (At Red Cross Hospital)
3. 23 years old, sanitation corps of Main Army Hospital, rays from behind while gathering with education group for morning greetings. Lost ear from burns. High level of hair loss, diarrhea, fever, spots. Level two burns, miraculously survived. (At Red Cross Hospital)
4. Takeuchi Yone (mother, thirty-one years old), Takeuchi Yō (daughter, thirteen years old). Yone, purple spots, bleeding gums, cough, breathing difficulties. Condition turned serious while nursing daughter. Two or three days after shooting died? Daughter Yō, hair loss, diarrhea, fever. Right elbow separated, outside of right knee—lower left thigh has external wounds, showing condition of ulcers. (At Ōshiba Public School, temporary evacuation place)[61]

These notes dramatically reveal the tension between the conventional demands of the *kagaku eiga* and the filmmakers working within those strictures. In at least one place in these notes, Kikuchi fails to suppress his emotional response in the process of turning human bodies into representation—or, more specifically, *as he converts human beings into data*. This kind of emotional response seems perfectly evacuated from the film itself, begging an examination of the difference between the media of "memo" and "cinema."

As the product of an individual, the Kikuchi memo presents few difficulties. Like any writer, he thinks of his audience and the conventional demands of the genre in which he works: in his role as a camera assistant, he records information on shots and their location for his directors and editors. For the scientists and writers, he includes information on medical aspects. However, as the producer of this writing, he is also capable of injecting a more personal response that sums up his feelings: "pitiful."

Made by a crew of more than thirty, not including scientists, supervisors, and bureaucrats, the film has a point of view that is far more com-

plicated, and far less obvious, than it seems at first glance. A useful tool for this task of analysis is the concept of "documentary voice" proposed by Bill Nichols.[62] A documentary's voice is the site of enunciation from which the film is produced, the place from which it speaks. *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* offers the viewer an explicit point of view in its introductory sequence. It begins with a short narrative of the attack, followed by a bird's-eye view of Japan via maps, gradually zeroing in on Hiroshima. Once on the ground, images of rubble, "which testify more eloquently than anything else to the enormous destructive power of the new bomb," accompany narration that locates us: beginning with images from fifteen kilometers away from the Epicenter, the film moves the spectator steadily in a single direction, to ten kilometers, then eight, five, four, two, fifteen hundred meters, then a thousand, eight hundred, three hundred. As the film escorts us to the zero point, a truck loaded with filmmakers and scientists converges on the very same spot. They all jump out of the truck, and with much pointing of fingers and scientific instruments and still cameras, their investigation—and the *kagaku eiga*—begins.

This is a classic arrival scene in the tradition of anthropology, a trope that taps deeply into the "first contact" metaphor. It is a new world of strange and awesome powers that we enter. "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" even plays in the background, indicating a novel kind of *will to power* containing an unintentional irony that Nietzsche would not have appreciated. Having staged an explicit point of view for the film in introducing these scientists, the filmmakers constantly reinforce it with scenes of the scientific teams walking through the rubble, taking measurements, picking flowers, peering into microscopes, gathering up bones, treating horrific injuries, and conducting autopsies in dark, makeshift sheds. The narrator stands in for the scientists, speaking for them in the strange, unnervingly technical language of specialists. In terms of authorship, the Education Ministry scientists are placed in positions of textual authority; in addition to their on-screen presence, their names and institutions are included on the titles introducing every section. Although the film offers them as the point of view governing the filmic investigation, the documentary voice is usually hidden by the work of the film. Behind the narrator, behind the scientists, the enunciation of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* comes from a far different place.

The atomic bombings obliterated the meaning held by both cities' topography; all the landmarks, grids of roads, natural terrain, and buildings were instantly rendered insignificant, even if they survived the blast. Suddenly, the city maps came to rely on an imaginary point: the Epicenter, the Hypocenter, Ground Zero. Anything straying from the sphere of this



Figure 22. A "mug shot" from *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.*

powerful point became meaningless and unseen. Even though the cities have long been rebuilt and their citizens live by new maps, outsiders still cling to the Epicenter. All creators of representations of the atomic bombings, no matter their physical or temporal location, inevitably feel the demanding pull of this point, this originary space in the air. The canisters of steel with affectionate names like "Little Boy" and "Fat Man" may have vaporized in their own self-annihilation, but they still demand the privilege of ultimate reference point, leaving only that powerfully magnetic, imaginary point we call the Epicenter. The necessity of resisting this demand raises the potential impossibility of adequately representing the horror of the atomic bombings. Writers, musicians, and filmmakers alike have worked hard to resist the call of the Epicenter for half a century, insisting on different meanings while struggling to overcome the seeming impossibility of any such attempt. The reason *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* is the single most important film about the atomic bombing—the reason its appropriations ultimately "fail" while being better films, the reason we must force ourselves to watch the original—is that it remains the only film that expresses no need to give human meaning to the bombing. That is to say, *the film gives voice to the point of view of the bomb itself.* Nothing is more terrifying.

"There is no attempt in [this film] to 'think from within the wounds' and to apply the lessons of human suffering, even if there are many images of actual wounds," wrote Tsurumi Shunsuke, referring to the Americans he assumed were responsible for the film's inhuman attitude.[63] In fact, this perfectly describes the point of view of the bomb that inflicted the wounds in the first place. If one attempts to "think from the place that inflicts wounds," the difficulty of adequately portraying extreme horror vanishes. The problematic of the impossibility of representation did not exist for the Nichiei filmmakers because they obeyed the call of the bomb. Working within the conventions of the *kagaku eiga,* they portrayed the cataclysmic events in Nagasaki and Hiroshima with the logic of the Epicenter. From this departure point (of view) there is nothing particularly challenging about describing the interaction of molecules and their effects on rock, wood, and living tissue.

This returns us to the differences between the media of "memo" and "film," the most crucial of which are the respective technologies of representation. It must be acknowledged that, unlike the memo's "pencil and paper," the cinematic apparatus consisting of "mechanism and light" is deeply linked to the point of view we confront at the Epicenter. Devices such as Marey's camera gun and the "camera guns" invented to shoot World War II air battles from the point of view of aircraft machine guns reveal this connection in the very roots of cinema.[64] Furthermore, artists of all political persuasions have been fond of comparing cinema to weaponry ever since the silent era. However, these are only surface examples that point us somewhere deeper, more fundamental. Referring to *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki,* Nibuya Takashi notes, "In this film, which was earnestly made as a medical report, the absolute indifference of camera/film is violently exposed, nullifying the good will or passions of the photographers."[65] When the Nichiei filmmakers submitted to the demands of the Epicenter, their technology of representation found its perfect match in the bomb. The film they produced represents a meeting of subject and object escaping the consciousness of its human producers. Documentary theory has dealt exclusively with the meaning humans invest in sounds and images of reality. This focus frequently obscures the absolute indifference of the sounds and images themselves. The complicated apparatus that captures, preserves, and reproduces light is fundamentally inhuman, like the bomb itself. Only in the brief vacuum of meaning when all human maps were obliterated by the extreme violence of the atomic explosions could a film like this be made.

At the same time, this does not foreclose the possibility of resistance to the Epicenter's insistent tug. If we attend to the film more closely, peer

into the spaces between the frames and reach behind its words, we may find an impressive will to resist. Nichiei was complicit with the Epicenter because it perfected the codes of the *kagaku eiga* that enabled the meeting of apparatus and atomic bomb. But this circle was not complete. Most viewers of the original film note a decisive difference between the Hiroshima and Nagasaki sections that cleaves their experience of the film in two. The Nagasaki half seems vaguely more humane. Kogawa Tetsuo describes this sensation:

> When I saw the Nagasaki part, especially the images of the Urakami church and the statue of the Christ, I couldn't help thinking that the influence of the Americans had been particularly strong. It seems that the filmmakers expressed a feeling of anger and indignation in these images. This is certainly because of Nagasaki's relationship to Christianity. I felt that Nagasaki had been looked at through Western eyes.[66]

More likely, it was seen through the eyes of a native of Nagasaki, Itō Sueo.

Each segment of the atomic bomb film was accomplished through the teamwork of scientists and cameramen. They shot the footage together, and the images were assembled according to scenarios penned by the scientists. As the senior director, Itō was placed in charge of postproduction, and he put extra effort into the Nagasaki section. Itō had grown up in Nagasaki and was outraged at what had happened to his home.[67] As noted above, Itō worked by his "own plan" on location—in what was left of his hometown. The other filmmakers assumed the perspective of the Epicenter, translating it faithfully to the screen and reserving any misgivings they might have felt for other media, such as memos, diaries, and face-to-face human conversation. On the other hand, Itō built his anger into the fabric of the Nagasaki section, to which he devoted special attention. He—and certainly others at Nichiei—treated the point of view of the bomb like a masquerade. Trapped by the powers of both the Education Ministry and the American occupation military, they worked within the limits of the *kagaku eiga* while subverting its conventions from the inside.

The Nagasaki section of the film, like the Hiroshima section, opens with a brief sketch of the city before its annihilation. It emphasizes Nagasaki's historical importance as a gateway between Japan and the outside world, showing a travelogue of prebomb views of Urakami Cathedral and environs, and pointing out with a touch of irony, "Surrounded by house-covered hills, Nagasaki is, or rather used to be, one of the most picturesque port cities of Japan." As in Hiroshima, the bomb obliterates all this, replacing it with the Epicenter as all-powerful reference point.

The Nagasaki section relies on the spherical guidelines surrounding



Figure 23. A representation of pain from the Nagasaki section.

the Epicenter, but reveals things there that the filmmakers of the Hiroshima section leave out as irrelevant. The plants examined in Nagasaki are in the newly planted garden of a man who, according to the narration, lost his house, his wife, and his daughter, but refused to leave his home. The scientists find the garden useful as a source of data for their investigation of the effects of radioactivity on seeds and plant life; the filmmakers use the garden to add a touch of melodrama that momentarily undermines the scientific tone of the *kagaku eiga*.

There are no moments like this in the Hiroshima section of the film, where "things" are treated only as "data." Without the slightest irony, the part of the Hiroshima section titled "Blast" notes in passing that one of the sturdier buildings at the Epicenter was a hospital. However, the damage the structure sustained is more important than its preblast function. The latter is irrelevant to the logic of the bomb. The comparable sequence in the Nagasaki section is quite different. While careful to follow the rule of stating the distance of each building from the Epicenter, the narrator never fails to note how many human beings were killed in each structure in Nagasaki. Moreover, the buildings shown are clearly chosen with care: schools, prisons, hospitals, and, with a legible tone of irony, the factory that produced the bombs dropped on Pearl Harbor.

The Nagasaki sequence on heat also carefully selects objects charged

with meaning. It opens with a long shot of Urakami Cathedral that gradually draws nearer and nearer and ends with a close-up of a statue of a religious figure at the church that has been scarred by the bomb's heat. Dark burns on its stone face look like tears. This structural movement between distance and closeness, between indifference and the potential for emotion, is repeated throughout the Nagasaki half of the film.

Nowhere is this more strongly evident than in the medical section, where an accumulation of destruction and violence overcomes the film's own cold, scientific framework. Earlier, in the Hiroshima section, the effects of the atomic bomb on human bodies are introduced in brutally clinical terms. The Hiroshima section is long and complicated, and with its frigid medical terminology, the narration is incomprehensible to the layperson. Human bodies are put on display; victims pose before the camera, exposing their wounds. This part of the film works from the outside in, starting with wounds to the skin, invading the body to examine bone fractures, and climaxing with autopsies, with the examination of organs and photomicroscopy of human tissue. In stark contrast, the Nagasaki section begins with music in minor mode and a jarring scene of two victims lying together—a mother and child. The music gives way to silence, and the images reveal one victim after another. This time, the narration avoids scientific jargon and simply describes the wounds suffered by each person in the attack. Most of the victims are young girls. The music returns near the end, with images of two extremely sick sisters and a little boy whose mouth has been burned into a gaping hole. This gradual climax of horrifying violence ends quietly with the image of a youth—with little hair left—surveying open fields of rubble outside the hospital window (Figure 24). Viewers may be numbed by this point, which comes more than two hours into the film; however, the design of this sequence, which avoids scientific investigation to emphasize human pain, infuses the Nagasaki section with something less than indifference. That is to say, *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* never achieves a perfect representation of the point of view of the Epicenter.

Few films or videos have come closer to embodying the absolute indifference of the camera, however, and that is what makes this film so powerfully, disturbingly, *attractive* to other filmmakers. Although it is difficult to admit, there are dangerous pleasures to be had here.[68] The work of subsequent filmmakers, despite their honest intentions of resistance, is driven by the will to appropriate this veiled power and its charms. In this sense, we may think of the exploitation of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* for "found footage" as a form of cannibaliza-

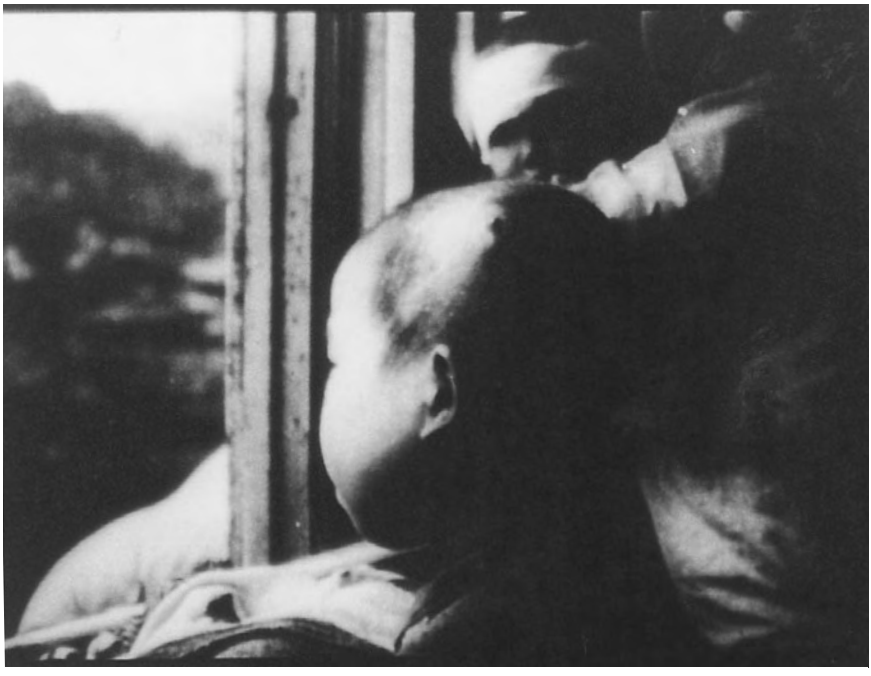


Figure 24. The final, ambiguous shot of the Nagasaki human effects section.

tion similar in kind to the other Nichiei film that was being produced simultaneously, *A Japanese Tragedy.* Itō and his colleagues, to the limited extent they were able, subverted the point of view of the bomb; subsequent filmmakers cannibalized their images to complete the subversion.

Even before Nichiei finished the film, the cannibalization began. As the Nichiei filmmakers collected their images in Hiroshima, the Tokyo office used their rushes in a newsreel released on 22 September 1945.[69] However, the next public cannibalization of its images exposes a viewership that had succumbed to the charms of the Epicenter. This was in the summer of 1946, when the U.S. government released the most horrific scenes of human victims to Paramount for its *Paramount News* reports of the Bikini experiments. A short article in the *New York Times* described the film in a matter-of-fact tone that reveals a mixture of dread and fascination: "Most of the victims look as though they had been scarred by an acetylene torch."[70] We find a better clue to people's reaction in the advertisements surrounding the article. It seems Paramount did not know how to handle the images, for the ads graphically emphasize the Bikini explosion with large type, including the Nichiei footage, but not calling much attention to it:

MOST SPECTACULAR PICTURES EVER FILMED
FIRST UNDERWATER BOMB MAKES CATACLYSMIC UPHEAVAL
Captured Jap Films Show After Effect of Atom-Blasted Hiroshima

This reserve did not last long. The powerful charms expressed in the meeting of Epicenter and apparatus immediately won viewers, and the next days' advertisements responded in kind. They switched Bikini to second billing and graphically appealed to the desires of potential spectators with larger, bolder print, and spectacular word choice:

CAPTURED JAP FILMS SHOW AFTER EFFECT OF ATOM-BLASTED HIROSHIMA
FILMS SHOW TERRIBLE SUFFERING OF
MAIMED, BURNED VICTIMS
UNDERWATER BOMB MAKES CATACLYSMIC UPHEAVAL

This fascination with the absolute indifference of the Epicenter and its violence was possible in the wake of the bomb, but since then the atomic bombings have slowly become more intricately woven into networks of human discourse, gradually moving out of the realm of the Epicenter. The "original" film becomes inseparable from and experienced through written histories, memoirs, and the fabric of other films. The point of view of the bomb has become veiled, and thus its potential power has increased dramatically.

After the silence of the occupation, filmmakers as diverse as Alain Resnais (*Hiroshima Mon Amour;* 1959) and Kamei Fumio (*It's Good to Be Alive* [Ikite ite yokatta]; 1956) began cannibalizing the silent print saved by the Nichiei conspirators. The print, returned to the Japanese government in 1967, remains suppressed in the hands of the Education Ministry and the Nishina Memorial Foundation.[71] However, this is only a copy of the McGovern print from the U.S. National Archives, which has an unusually open policy allowing anyone from anywhere to duplicate films in the public domain. Once this film was deposited at the National Archives for all humanity, and protected by this institution, which values access, film and video artists from around the world started to cannibalize its images, beginning with Paul Ronder and Erik Barnouw's eloquent and understated *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945*.

In contrast to fictional filmmakers, nearly all of whom dare to approach the representation of the atomic attacks only in the most indirect terms—through metaphor or science fiction—documentarists courageously

cut straight to the Epicenter, cannibalizing documentary images of human bodies that express the terrifying banality of the bomb. Despite this process of constant reappropriation and repetition, the images continue to tap into the absolute indifference of the Epicenter. Thus they possess a powerful attraction for documentary filmmakers and viewers alike. Unlike their colleagues in fictional filmmaking, documentarists turn the impossibility of representation to their own advantage. By removing and consuming pieces of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki,* documentarists incorporate its terrible power. They tear away the veil and offer a glimpse of the cruel, matter-of-fact violence of the bomb. Through the power they have made their own, they unleash the energy contained in these images, only to divert it toward new kinds of resistance.

Through these precious efforts, filmmakers around the world have converted *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* into an archive of memory. As Kogawa suggests, our atomic bomb film has gone far beyond the categories of "film," "video," or "television." Its images have been peeled from their tissue of emulsion and turned into a virtual body of atomic images available for cannibalization. The actual celluloid exposed by Nichiei in the remains of Hiroshima and Nagasaki remains *maboroshi,* but its images are now scattered over the earth in every medium possible, including human consciousness. Despite the continuing production of nuclear weaponry by people living the logic of the Epicenter, perhaps one reason the fruits of their labor have not been used in attacks on human beings is that filmmakers have deposited the terrifying, indifferent images of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* into the consciousness of each and every one of us.

This reworking of experience and replenishment of memory becomes all the more important as the real suffering of the *hibakusha* recedes into history. For this reason, the one appropriation of this film that escapes the magical logic of cannibalization is probably the most important. In an act of real resistance that in some way continued and completed the defiance of the four Nichiei filmmakers before them, Japanese citizens formed a movement that successfully circumvented Toho's dubious legal claim to the film and its further suppression by the power of the Education Ministry. In the 1980s, they repatriated *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* and all the color footage shot by the USSBS by collecting donations and purchasing everything, foot by foot, from the U.S. National Archives.[72] After buying the Nichiei film, they even arranged for it to be broadcast on television, uncut, through regional stations.[73] In the process of repatriating the original material, they made their own films and

published books that resist the charms of the Epicenter not by cannibalizing its power, but by redirecting viewers and readers to a space that had been all but forgotten (or simply avoided): the point of view of the victim.

Substituting the point of view of *hibakusha* for the Epicenter as the all-powerful reference point, they searched out those who had survived among the people captured by Nichiei and USSBS cameras. They asked directly for permission to show the survivors' images publicly. The movement's films, books, and screenings were centered on the experiences of the people who had been photographed. The images appropriated—the callous mug shots of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki*—were placed alongside contemporary film footage and snapshots of the victims testifying about their experience, as well as images of them smiling and playing with their children. This opposition of representations expresses the tragedy of *hibakusha* without losing sight of their humanity. Despite its complex history of suppressions and all the competing intentions to which it has been subjected, this archive of memory has survived to bring us to this point. This, finally, is the real originary point for atomic cinema. One survivor, Taniguchi Sumiteru, remembered:

> Even at the period of shooting, which was five months after the bombing, bloody pus flowed from both sides of my body every day. It was terrible.



Figure 25. Taniguchi Sumiteru.

> Before photographing my deep-red back, the nurses wiped it clean. Before shooting! Even though it was winter, maggots emerged daily, and picking them out was awful. The lights during shooting were hot, and any number of times I thought I'd faint.[74]

Another, Shibasaki Tokihiko, said simply:

> They did this to my body. And they even took pictures![75]

Conclusion

Those familiar with the history of American and European documentary will undoubtedly recognize both similarities and differences between that history and the history of nonfiction cinema in Japan. The similarities may be attributable to the few Western documentaries and newsreels that achieved distribution in Japan or were screened for the industry at Tokyo embassies. This seems especially likely, considering that, with the exception of Kamei, none of the important Japanese documentary filmmakers or theorists is known to have traveled outside of Asia. Probably more important were all the translations of foreign texts by thinkers as diverse as Vertov, Pudovkin, Eisenstein, Balasz, Cavalcanti, and others. However, I have attempted to problematize the notion of an "influence" built on the assumption of a one-way flow of effect. When these ideas and examples from abroad became inserted into the Japanese film world, they were inevitably understood through the matrix woven from the strong convention and the most novel problem solving of the moment.

If Euro-American and Japanese documentary share many of the broadest historical patterns, it is likely that many of the core issues are homologous. Documentary filmmakers always see their craft as an international mode of filmmaking deeply rooted in the here and now. They always deal with tensions created by a mainstream entertainment cinema that positions them on the industrial periphery. That is why it is unreasonable to ignore the overlapping spheres of "professional" and "amateur" documentary. All documentary filmmakers also experience a set of tensions stemming from differing views of nonfiction film, as individual/collaborative expression, as social action, or as a recording medium—between documentary as art and documentary as science, as Japanese theorists so often pitched the problem. Finally, documentary filmmakers also find themselves caught between the massive forces of the market and the state. Although filmmakers in all

parts of the world share these interacting factors, their respective resolutions to all the tensions have led them to develop relatively autonomous histories.

At first glance, the history of Japanese nonfiction film would seem to have two stages, starting with the market-driven industrial film and its challenge by the politicized left, followed by the era of spurious, state-sponsored propaganda. However, in this volume I have emphasized the continuities running through these five decades of stylistic development. A gradual process of conventionalization underlies the elaboration of nonfiction form, from the actuality to the constructed news film and fake news film, then the news film, the *henshū eiga,* and the proliferation of form under the umbrella of *kiroku eiga*. Continuities exist even at the most apparently radical of breaks, as we have seen in the relationship of the proletarian film movement to the *bunka eiga*. Many of the most committed documentarists in the late 1930s and 1940s got their start in Prokino and other sectors of the left. Their movement was both suppressed and coopted. Furthermore, we have seen how, as these filmmakers continually developed their documentary thought and practice throughout the 1930s, public discourse underwent great conventionalization. Cinema's place in this process was inseparable from the manner in which these intellectuals conceived the role of cinema in the world.

In order to conceptualize cinema's place in the larger currents of society, the public discursive field—the sum of governmental regulation and gestural, linguistic, ritual, and artistic communication—crystallized in the celluloid of the wartime cinema. Because the function of public codes is to naturalize the discourses of domination, the medium of cinema attracted special attention from all sectors of society, and it eventually became the vehicle for the cinematic drama of the whole of Asia collaborating with a unified citizenry toward the pursuit of Japan's Imperial Way. The existence of a hidden discursive field reminds us that all such unities are suspicious and that both the powerful and the subordinate have their own hidden discourses. This has made the movement of power through this history highly visible, from the exertion of industrial controls through repressive apparatuses of the state to the occasional cinematic vocalization of discontent. Attempts by artists such as Kamei Fumio may or may not have been "antifascist" or "antiwar," but they do point to considerable play in the public conventions. Filmmakers could express this discourse—the frustration of living in poverty and the difficulties of life under total war—because they shared it with so many others in the hidden spaces of society. These dynamics circulating between the public and the hidden also help explain the state of the art at the end of the war, from the electric release of the pent-up

energies of the hidden spaces (as seen in Kamei and Iwasaki's film) to the bewilderment at the evaporation of the public codes and the uncertainties of a new age of atomic warfare. The nature of the conflict that had loomed over the Japanese experience for nearly fifteen years, or perhaps as early as the Russo-Japanese War, was radically altered in the instant Hiroshima exploded. However, we must also recognize the continuities over the apparent gulf separating pre- and postwar periods.[1] The "victim consciousness" that seems to elide Japanese war responsibility, frustrating Japan's critics to no end, may be seen as the transformation of the wartime hidden discursive field into new postwar public codes for representation. The disciplined hardship and suffering deployed for the waging of war became the memory of that suffering ensuring peace—while the suffering of the rest of Asia remained in hidden spaces.

An analogous process unfolded in postwar Japan around the visage of the emperor. As seen in the *Japanese Tragedy* affair, the leaders of the American occupation protected the emperor system from attack to preserve the new order in society. There are indications that the critique of the emperor swiftly formed a new hidden discourse for those whose understanding of the wartime suffering was informed by a geopolitical vision of history. In Nichiei's own company newsletter, an issue celebrating the one hundredth postwar issue of *Nippon News* in 1947 published a curious letter from one of the newsreel's viewers. This spectator points out that the postwar *Nippon News* had achieved a reputation as a "Red newsreel," thanks in part to several issues devoted to union actions such as the Toho strike. However, around the thirtieth issue he noticed that the newsreel "committed apostasy" and started reporting only bright, happy news (in other words, the newsreel reflected the "reverse course" policies of the occupation). However, the viewer notes that he keeps finding something hidden in the films, and Nichiei probably published the letter for the sake of those who had not noticed:

> If you look at *The Emperor Goes to the Mountains* [Tenno san'in e], the next shot after a close-up of the emperor taking off his hat and answering [a question] was a close-up of a cow sticking its tongue out. I may be thinking too hard, but even without narration there is a sharp sarcasm about the "Imperial Visit."[2]

Questions concerning the responsibility of the emperor, always connected to the violence of the long war, ensured that the dynamic of sacrifice violence/massacre violence, public discourse/hidden discourse also carried over into the postwar period. However, the new constitution allowed for

considerable "noise" in the postwar public discursive field, and this was reflected in the postwar documentary.

Debates such as the one between Imamura Taihei and Iwasaki Akira ensued over the nature of documentary realism, the inclusion of *yarase* in documentary, and the legitimacy of any form of reenactment. The wartime style of the *bunka eiga* had essentially been imported into the postwar industry. The approach to representing the world was just as fictitious, but the documentary was now being directed toward the democratization of the masses. The nature of documentary screenwriting and the politics of reenactment continued to be frequent topics of debate; however, as I have indicated in the section on Imamura Taihei, the legacy of the wartime hard style was treated only cursorily in the late 1940s and 1950s.

One of the noisiest discussions occurred when some filmmakers used a stuffed bear in a documentary about the Japanese Alps in *The White Mountains* (Shiroi sanmyaku; 1957). Critics of *The White Mountains* had only to point to Hani Susumu's *Children of the Classroom* (Kyōshitsu no kodomotachi; 1954) and *Children Who Draw Pictures* (E o kaku kodomotachi; 1957), which forged a new documentary based on observation. Preceding American direct cinema by a number of years, these films shocked audiences with their observational style—a shock ultimately dependent upon their comparison to the decided lack of spontaneity in the dominant documentary practices.

The 1950s was also the era in which the fields of public relations film and television drove spectacular growth in documentary production. The high-growth economy demanded moving images to create sellable reputations among consumers and to sell product, and the television networks hungered for programming. However, this exacerbated tensions within documentary that were strongly reminiscent of the 1930s. Public relations films required filmmakers who would toe the line in terms of style, and divergence through stylistic excess or apparent critique was disciplined. The tensions this created within the documentary and PR film community, which was still dominated by the Japan Communist Party and left-leaning artists, came to a head on the eve of the Security Treaty renewal in the late 1950s. Led by such filmmakers as Matsumoto Toshio and Kuroki Kazuo, younger filmmakers brought the dominant style under severe critique and pointed to its roots in the wartime cinema. They wrote articles, published journals, held conferences, and forged a politicized, highly experimental documentary cinema.

Whereas prewar filmmakers had faced prison and physical violence, this was a new era, and these young artists were punished through economic

threats. They were fired from their production companies or simply never given work. At the same time, there were other factors setting postwar filmmaking apart, such as the advancement and standardization of 16mm film technologies, which made independence an option. Buckling under strictures that had their roots in the prewar era, many of these filmmakers quit their jobs and started from scratch in a newly forming independent sector. Committed documentarists moved on to a wide variety of issues, including the legacies of the Pacific and Korean Wars, Minamata mercury poisoning, Japan's relationship to the U.S. military, the atomic bombings, the liberation movements in Okinawa, the construction of Narita Airport, and many other hot problems.

I have rather arbitrarily halved the history of Japanese documentary into two periods of five decades each. Not surprisingly, many of the key issues and ideas coursing through the first half of this history continue to the present day. The tactics of the independent rebels of recent decades—assembling production monies through donations, making a positive aesthetic of roughness and limits, creating independent networks of spectators at strikes, protests, and other events related to social movements—replicate the innovations of Prokino. The current drive to insert the subjectivities of the filmmaker and the filmed into the tissue of the film recalls the best wartime work of Kamei Fumio. The inventive ways today's filmmakers bring films and audiences together evoke the interrupted project of Nakai Masakazu. Even some of the stylistic elements are immediately recognizable, such as the frequent and creative use of intertitles (a vestige of the long transition to sound film in Japan). At the same time, today's filmmakers are simply deploying the naturalized conventions of the present, approaches to documentary representation that have been handed down to them from previous generations of filmmakers. They have little sense of their own history, but I find that one of the greatest pleasures of contemporary Japanese documentary is the faint resonance of past practices, the echoes of both noisy and whispered debates, and the traces of harder styles and harder times.

Notes

Introduction

1. Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A History of the Non-fiction Film,* 2d rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 128; Richard M. Barsam, *Nonfiction Film: A Critical History,* rev. and expanded ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 133–34. For other English-language sources, see the catalog for the 1990 International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam, which has glosses on Japanese documentary history by Shimizu Akira and Satō Tadao: Satō Tadao, "Developments in the Japanese Documentary after 1945," in *International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam 1990* (Amsterdam: International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam, 1990), 108–10; Shimizu Akira, "The History of the Japanese Documentary (1897–1945)," in *International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam 1990* (Amsterdam: International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam, 1990), 102–4. More recently, see Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio, eds., *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts* (New York: Harwood, 1994).
2. Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry,* expanded ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982), 146–47.
3. Nornes and Fukushima, *Japan/America Film Wars.*
4. German left-wing filmmakers were inspired by Prokino through an article by proletarian theater activist Senda Koreya, who was living in Europe; see Senda Koreya, "Proletarische Film-Bewegung in Japan," *Arbeiterbuehne und Film* 18, no. 2 (February 1931): 26–27. The Worker's Film and Photo League was stimulated by the example of the little-known Japanese Worker's Camera Club in New York City; considering the timing, we can assume that this group was imitating developments back in Japan. See Fred Sweet, Eugene Rosow, and Allan Francovich, "Pioneers: An Interview with Tom Brandon," *Film Quarterly* 26, no. 5 (fall 1973): 12. See also Bert Hogenkamp, "Workers' Newsreels in Germany, the Netherlands and Japan during the Twenties and Thirties," in *"Show Us Life": Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Committed Documentary,* ed. Thomas Waugh, (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1984), 62.
5. Kamei Katsuichirō, "Bunka Eiga no Gainen to Gijutsu" (The conception and technique of the culture film), *Nihon Eiga* 5, no. 1 (1940): 10–16.
6. Leslie Pincus, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shūzō and the Rise of National Aesthetics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
7. Andrew E. Barshay, *State and Intellectual in Imperial Japan: The Public Man in Crisis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 20.
8. James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1990). Scott uses the word *transcripts* to substitute for *discourse,* arguing that the latter's connections to theories of hegemony and ideology cannot account for the complexity of power relations between the powerful and the powerless. However, his critique of Marxism and poststructuralism is not completely convincing, and his notion of transcripts is easily portable to the theoretical contexts he hopes to destroy. Despite this inadequate theorization, Scott provides an extremely powerful account of how discourses kept hidden in, as he puts it, the "teeth of power" occasionally surface to public view, where they are met with brutal force or revolutionary energy. Scott's description of these dynamics heavily informs my work.
9. An adequate explanation of the social and political forces constituting these developments in

Taishō and early Shōwa periods, and the role of intellectuals and culture producers in the entire process, is far beyond the scope of my project. This is being done convincingly well by historians such as Andrew Barshay and Leslie Pincus, whose work informs my conception of the period. In fact, both of these scholars use terms that attempt to describe what I am calling *transcripts*. Barshay's study of Nanbara Shigeru and Hasegawa Nyozekan poses the two intellectuals as "insider" and "outsider." He bifurcates the public sphere into inside and outside, official and nonofficial, to historicize the complex process that compelled leftists like Nyozekan to serve the interests of the state in the course of the 1930s. According to this mapping, the exterior, "outside" positions of the public sphere disappeared through co-optation and the taming of radical discourse, leaving one all-encompassing national community as the guarantor of all meaning. Pincus plots a similar course in the fabric of a "culturescape."

1. A Prehistory of the Japanese Documentary

1. Anderson and Richie, *The Japanese Film*; Peter High, "The Dawn of Cinema in Japan," *Journal of Contemporary History* 19, no. 1 (1984): 23–57. In Japanese, even more detailed descriptions may be found in Tanaka Jun'ichirō's *Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi* (Developmental history of Japanese film), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1980); Satō Tadao, *Nihon Eigashi* (History of Japanese cinema), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1995); Koga Futoshi, ed., *Lumière!* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun, 1995). For a detailed description of the first few years, see Tsukada Yoshinobu, *Nihon Eigashi no Kenkyū* (Study of Japanese film history) (Tokyo: Gendaishokan, 1980). See also Yoshida Chieo, *Mo Hitotsu no Eigashi: Benshi no Jidai* (One more film history: Age of the *benshi*) (Tokyo: Jijitsushinsha, 1978); Iwamoto Kenji and Saiki Tomonori, eds., *Kinema no Seishun* (Japanese cinema in its youth) (Tokyo: Libroport, 1988); and the first volume of Iwanami's *Kōza Nihon Eiga* (Seminar: Japanese cinema), Imamura Shōhei, Satō Tadao, Shindō Kaneto, Tsurumi Shunsuke, and Yamada Yōji, eds., *Nihon Eiga no Tanjo* (The birth of Japanese film) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1985).
2. Koga's edited volume *Lumière!* contains a wealth of information on every one of these films. Along with frame blowups from each film, it includes dates, places, and the names of cameramen. It also contains essays by Koga, Komatsu Hiroshi, and Hasumi Shigehiko. This catalog is available on the Internet at: http://www.informatics.tuad.ac.jp/net-expo/cinema/lumiere/catalogue/fr/f-index.html. See also Yoshida Yoshishige, Yamaguchi Masao, and Kinoshita Naoyuki, eds., *Eiga Denrai: Shinematogurafu to "Meiji no Nihon"* (Film heritage: Cinématographe and *Meiji Japan*) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995).
3. The amateur films were shot by N. G. Munro and Hata, and can be seen or purchased from the Shimonaka Zaidan in Tokyo. The Sakane film is called *Brethren of the North* (Kita no dōhō). A description of the production can be found in Sakane Tazuko, "*Kita no dōhō* Zatsukan" (Miscellaneous thoughts on *Brethren of the North*), *Bunka Eiga* 1, no. 1 (January 1941): 74–75. See also the biography of Sakane by Ōnishi Etsuko, *Mizoguchi Kenji o Ai Shita Onna* (The woman who loved Mizoguchi Kenji) (Tokyo: Sanichi Shobō, 1993), 124–60. For a typical review, see *"Kita no dōhō" (Brethren of the North), Bunka Eiga* 1, no. 5 (May 1941): 53–54.
4. *Yomiuri Shinbun,* 17 October 1900, cited in Tanaka, *Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi,* 1:93.
5. Shumpei Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 196–223. Okamoto attributes the government's success in waging the war to the leaders' ability to manipulate the burgeoning media. John D. Pierson gives a sense of this period from inside the world of print media in his biography of Tokutomi Sohō, whose *Kokumin Shinbun* was one of the targets of the rioters; John D. Pierson, *Tokutomi Sohō 1863–1957: A Journalist for Modern Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980).
6. Satō, *Nihon Eigashi,* 1:107.
7. Uchida Hyakken, *Ryojun Nyūjōshiki*, quoted in ibid., 1:110. (Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.)
8. High, "The Dawn of Cinema in Japan," 34–35.
9. Silent films in Japan were always accompanied by *benshi,* performers who stood near the screen and provided narration. They filled in voices and added colorful description, providing background information for the action. The best general history of the institution of the *benshi* may be found in Joseph Anderson, "Spoken Silents in the Japanese Cinema," in *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History,* ed. Arthur Nolletti Jr. and David Desser (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 259–310.
10. This is far earlier than the period we usually associate with the *rensageki,* the 1910s. Murayama Tomoyoshi, "Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi" (A history of the development of Japanese cinema), in *Puroretaria Eiga no Chishiki* (Proletarian film knowledge), ed. Iwasaki Akira and Murayama Tomoyoshi (Tokyo: Naigaisha, 1932), 8.
11. Komatsu Hiroshi, *Kigen no Eiga* (Cinema of origin) (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1991), 287–314.

12. Quoted in Tanaka, *Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi,* 1:79, quoted in High, "The Dawn of Cinema in Japan," 33 (High's translation).
13. Komatsu, *Kigen no Eiga,* 308–12.
14. Ibid., 310–11.
15. Komatsu Hiroshi, "Transformations in Film as Reality (Part 1): Questions Regarding the Genesis of Nonfiction Film," trans. A. A. Gerow, *Documentary Box* 5 (15 October 1994): 4–5. This article may be found on the Internet at http://www.city.yamagata.yamagata.jp/yidff/docbox/5/box5-1-e.html.
16. *Kobe Shinbun,* 21 June 1905, quoted in High, "The Dawn of Japanese Cinema," 36 (High's translation).
17. Satō Tadao, *Nihon Kiroku Eizo-shi* (History of the Japanese documentary image) (Tokyo: Hyōronsha, 1977), 26.
18. "Bangumi 1" (Program 1), in "Nihon no Kiroku Eiga Tokushū: Senzenhen (3)" (Retrospective of Japanese documentary film: Prewar period no. 3), *Film Center* 11 (18 January 1973): 4.
19. Yabushita T., "Monbushō Eiga Seisaku Genba no Omoide" (Memories of the Education Ministry's film production), in "Nihon no Kiroku Eiga Tokushū: Senzenhen (3)" (Retrospective of Japanese documentary film: Prewar period no. 3), *Film Center* 11 (18 January 1973): 14–15.
20. Miriam Silverberg has argued precisely this in "Constructing a New Cultural History of Prewar Japan," in *Japan in the World,* ed. Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993), 115–43.
21. Before 1868, Japan was a semicentralized state with limited contact with the outside world. Some felt that the country was dangerously vulnerable to Western powers, and so a coup "restored" the emperor to rule a modern nation-state designed after a variety of European models.
22. One of the organizers recalled the affair several years later in Koro Tamakazu, *Katsudo Shashin no Chishiki* (Motion pictures knowledge) (Tokyo: Shobundō Shoten, 1927), 351–53. Forewords to this volume by Tachibana Takashirō, Aochi Chūzō, and Takahashi Gentarō testify to the continuing significance of the event.
23. Shirai Shigeru, *Kamera to Jinsei* (Camera and life) (Tokyo: Unitsūshin, 1981).
24. For a short history of *Eiga Zuihitsu* and a description of this debate, see Makino Mamoru's "Kiroku Eiga no Rironteki Dōkō o Otte" (Chasing the theoretical movement of documentary film), *Unitsūshin,* nos. 44–47 (6 July–3 August 1978).
25. Ezaki Shingo, "Henshū Kōki" (Editorial afterword), *Eiga Zuihitsu* 2, no. 1 (January 1928): 57.
26. Shimizu Hikaru and Iwasaki Akira, "Ware Ware no Mondai" (Our problem), *Eiga Zuihitsu* 2, no. 3 (February 1928): 2–11.
27. Ibid., 5.
28. The government clearly found Iwasaki's group far more threatening than Shimizu's. This is obvious in government surveillance reports of the time. It is also evidenced in Shimizu's ability to publish a collection of his avant-garde essays around the same time Iwasaki was languishing in prison. See Shimizu Hikaru, *Eiga to Bunka* (Film and culture) (Kyoto: Kyōiku Tosho, 1941).
29. Pincus, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan.*
30. I cover these controversies at some length in "The Object of Japanese Documentary: Postwar Struggles over Subjectivity," in a forthcoming issue of *Positions* titled "Open to the Public: Postwar Japan and the Public Sphere," ed. Leslie Pincus.
31. In his work on amateur film, Nada Hisashi often discusses the apparent love/hate friction between the proletarian film movement and amateur filmmakers. See in particular his case study of one amateur auteur: Nada Hisashi, "Tejima Masuji Geijutsu Tōjōshugisha no Hanmon: Shinario 'Kutsu' no Jidai" (Tejima Masuji and the anguish of an aesthete: The era of the *Shoes* scenario), *Fs* 5 (1996): 86–94.

2. The Innovation of Prokino

1. The background information in this section comes from the following general histories, which constitute the most useful secondary sources on Prokino. By far the best work is Namiki Shinsaku [Iwasaki Tarō], *Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Purokino) Zenshi* (A complete history of the Japan Proletariat Film League [Prokino]) (Tokyo: Gōdō Shuppan, 1986). A shorter history emphasizing the movement's publishing efforts is provided by Makino Mamoru, "*Shinkō Eiga, Puroretaria Eiga, Purokino, Dainiji Purokino* Oyobi *Eiga Kurabu*: Kaisetsu, Kaidai" (*Shinkō Eiga, Proletarian Film, Prokino,* the second *Proletarian Film,* and *Film Club*: Commentary and bibliography), in *Shōwa Shoki Sayoku Eiga Zasshi: Bekkan* (Early Shōwa left-wing film journals: Supplement) (Tokyo: Senki Fukkokuban Gyokai, 1981), 3–27. This publication also includes a complete bibliography of the Prokino magazines as well as short reminiscences by nineteen former members that provide vivid portraits of the movement from a variety of perspectives. The volume

was edited on the occasion of the impressive reproduction of all the Prokino magazines listed in the title of Makino's essay. This set can be ordered from Kusansha, 1-5-7 Hongō, Bunkyō-ku, Tokyo 113 Japan. This precious resource was indispensable for my research. It even includes reproductions of a poster, screening programs, and tickets. Makino Mamoru's essay on the precursors to Prokino is one of his finest pieces of research: "Nihon Proretaria Eiga Dōmei (Prokino) no Sōritsu Katei ni Tsuite no Kōsatsu" (Consideration of the process of establishing the Proletarian Film League of Japan [Prokino]), *Eigagaku* 2, no. 7 (September 1983): 2–20. See also Fujita Motohiko, *Gendai Eiga no Kigen* (The origin of modern cinema) (Tokyo: Kinokuniya, 1965), which traces the relationship of the movement to the tendency film, as well as Namiki Shinsaku's "Purokino no Undō" (The movement of Prokino), in *Kōza Nihon Eiga,* vol. 2, *Musei Eiga no Kansei* (The completion of the silent film) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1986), 228–41. Makino also provides a good bibliography in Noto Setsuo, Iwasaki Tarō, Iwasaki Akira, Atsugi Taka, Kitagawa Tetsuo, and Makino Mamoru, "Purokino no Katsudō" (Prokino's activities), *Gendai to Shisō* 19 (March 1975): 86–117. Iwasaki offers a lively history of the movement in his biography, Iwasaki Akira, *Nihon Eiga Shishi* (A personal history of the Japanese cinema) (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1977), 11–92. Contemporary histories of interest include Kamimura Shūkichi, "Nippon Puroretaria Eiga Hattatsu-shi" (A history of the development of Japanese proletarian cinema), in *Puroretaria Eiga no Chishiki* (Proletarian film knowledge), ed. Iwasaki Akira and Murayama Tomoyoshi (Tokyo: Naigaisha, 1932), 25–60; Kitagawa Tetsuo, "Puroretaria Eiga Undō no Rekishi" (History of the proletarian film movement), in *Puroretaria Eiga Undō Riron* (Theory of the proletarian film movement), ed. Shinkō Eigasha (Tokyo: Tenjinsha, 1930), 3–19; Nishimura Masami, *Kogata Eiga: Rekishi to Gijutsu* (Small-gauge film: History and technique) (Tokyo: Shikai Shobō, 1941), 182–84, 190; Iwasaki Akira, *Eiga to Shihonshugi* (Film and capitalism) (Tokyo: Ōraisha, 1931). A few articles have been published in English. For example, members of the left-wing film movement in the United States published a short report in their own magazine: "Proletarian Cinema in Japan," *Experimental Cinema* 5 (1934): 52. A retrospective view may be found in the lively discussion between Noto Setsuo and Komori Shizuo in A. A. Gerow and Makino Mamoru, "Documentarists of Japan No. 5: Prokino," *Documentary Box* 5 (15 October 1994): 6–14. English and original Japanese texts are available on the Internet at http://www.city.yamagata.yamagata.jp/yidff/docbox/5/box5-2-e.html. See also Bert Hogenkamp, "Workers' Newsreels in Germany, the Netherlands and Japan during the Twenties and Thirties," in *"Show Us Life": Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Committed Documentary,* ed. Thomas Waugh (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1984), 47–68. In German, see Senda Koreya, "Proletarische Film-Bewegung in Japan," *Arbeiterbuehne und Film* 18, no. 2 (February 1931): 26–27; Yamada Kazuo, "Das soziale Erwachen des japanischen Films," in *Dokumentarfilm in Japan, Seine demokratische und kaempferische Traditionen,* ed. Eckhart Jahnke, Manred Lichtenstein, and Kazuo Yamada (Berlin: Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR, 1974), 29–40.

2. My sources for background information on the proletarian literature movement are G. T. Shea, *Leftwing Literature in Japan* (Tokyo: Hōsei University Press, 1964); Iwamoto Yoshio, "Proletarian Literature Movement," in *Kōdansha Encyclopedia of Japan* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1983), 254–256; Iwamoto Yoshio, "Aspects of the Proletarian Literary Movement in Japan," in *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy,* ed. Bernard S. Silberman and H. D. Harootunian (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), 156–82. Actually, Namiki does a fine job of helping the reader navigate this complex ideological battlefield in *Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Purokino) Zenshi,* and Makino is also very helpful in *"Shinkō Eiga."*
3. However, this reasoning may be faulty, considering Shimizu's later collaboration with Nakai Masakazu on Popular Front activism.
4. Sasa Genjū, "Noda Sōgi no Futsukakan" (Two days at the Noda strike), *Puroretaria Eiga* 3, no. 3 (March 1931): 32–39, 66.
5. George O. Totten, "Japanese Industrial Relations at the Crossroads: The Great Noda Strike of 1927–1928," in *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy,* ed. Bernard S. Silberman and H. D. Harootunian (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), 398–436.
6. Sasa Genjū, "Gangu/Buki—Satsueiki" (Camera—toy/weapon), *Senki* (Battle flag) (June 1928): 29–33.
7. Ibid., 29.
8. Ibid., 30.
9. Ibid., 31.
10. Nada Hisashi has conducted extensive research into the early history of *kogata eiga.* See his continuing series in *Fs:* Nada Hisashi, "Nihon Kojin Eiga no Rekishi (Senzenhen 1): Kinugasa Teinosuke to Iu Senpai" (The history of the Japanese personal film [prewar period 1]: The senpai called Kinugasa Teinosuke), *Fs* 1 (1992): 68–75; Nada Hisashi, "Nihon Kojin Eiga no Rekishi (Senzenhen 2): Ayaukute Yawaraka na Kikai—Pate Bebii Tōjō no Zengo" (The history of the Japanese personal film (prewar period 2): Soft, dangerous machine—before and after the ap-

pearance of the Pathé Baby), *Fs* 2 (1993): 87–94; Nada Hisashi, "Nihon Kojin Eiga no Rekishi (Senzenhen 3): Kaikyū, Gijutsu, Seigen—Sakuhin no Dekiru Made" (The history of the Japanese personal film (prewar period 3): Class, technique, limits—until films are possible), *Fs* 3 (1994): 74–81; Nada Hisashi, "Nihon Kojin Eiga no Rekishi (Senzenhen 4): Tejima Masuji—Toshi Kōkyōgaku Eiga to Karigarizumu" (The history of the Japanese personal film (prewar period 4): City symphony films and Caligari-ism), *Fs* 4 (1995): 68–75. Nada has also published some of this work in English. See, for example, Nada Hisashi, "The Little Cinema Movement in the 1920s and the Introduction of Avant-Garde Cinema in Japan," *Iconics* 3 (1994): 39–68.

11. Sasa explicates his idea of "nichijōteki mochikomu," or bringing into everyday life, in Sasa Genjū, "Idō Eigatai" (Mobile film troops), *Senki* (August 1928): 123–24.
12. Sasa, "Gangu/Buki," 33. Trunk Theater changed its name to Left-Wing Theater Film Unit in 1928, when the organization of which it was a part joined NAPF.
13. Iwasaki, *Nihon Eiga Shishi,* 20–21.
14. Makino Mamoru sorts out this confusing array of organizations in "Nihon Proretaria Eiga Dōmei (Prokino) no Sōritsu Katei ni Tsuite no Kōsatsu" (Rethinking the emergence of the Proletarian Film League of Japan [Prokino]), *Eigagaku* 2, no. 7 (September 1983): 2–20. My translation of this article appears in *Gaku no Susume: Essays in Tribute of Makino Mamoru,* ed. Aaron A. Gerow and Abé Mark Nornes (Victoria, B.C.: Trafford/Kinema Club, 2001), 15–45. I found this essay to be an excellent guide for reading through the journals I reviewed in my research, many of which can be found only in the Makino Mamoru Collection.
15. Kishi Matsuo, "*Eiga Kaihō* Kaitai no Jiko Hihan" (Self-critique concerning the dismantling of *Film Liberation*), *Puroretaria Eiga* 1, no. 1 (June 1928): 10–14.
16. Kimura Tamotsu/Tsutomu, "Shinario Gurafu: Kōshin" (Scenario graph: *Parade*), *Eiga Kōjō* 3, no. 2 (March 1928): 18–20.
17. "Sengen" (Declaration), *Eiga Kōjō* 3, no. 2 (March 1928): 1–4.
18. Ibid., 3–4. The declaration is misquoted in Kitagawa, "Puroretaria Eiga Undō no Rekishi," 9.
19. "Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Renmei Setsuritsu Keikaku ni Tsuite" (On the plan to establish the Proletarian Film Federation of Japan), *Eiga Kaihō* 3 (February/March 1928).
20. Kishi, "*Eiga Kaihō* Kaitai no Jiko Hihan," 14.
21. "Sengen" (Declaration), *Puroretaria Eiga* 1, no. 1 (June 1928): 6–9.
22. The Federation's Fukumotoism was attacked before Sasa issued his manifesto in the pages of *Eichō:* Oikawa Shinichi and Kita Seimi, "Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Renmei no 'Sengen' no Hihan Yori Kōdō no Hihan Made" (From criticism of the Proletarian Film Federation of Japan's 'Declaration' to criticism of this action), *Eichō* 4, no. 7 (July 1928): 8–20.
23. Takida Izuru, "Puroretaria Eiga e no Michi" (The road to proletarian film), *Puroretaria Eiga* 3 (August/September 1928): 8–19.
24. "NAPF Eigabu to no Gōdō Mondai" (The issue of merging with the NAPF film unit), *Puroretaria Eiga* 3 (August/September 1928): 1.
25. Postwar histories of Prokino have virtually ignored the efforts of the Federation. Most of these were written by former members, and most historians have simply relied on their work without doing primary research. Furthermore, when the journals of the "proletarian film movement" were reprinted, Prokino's predecessors were silently excluded. The prehistory of the movement that I have described would probably have been lost were it not for the exceptional work of Makino Mamoru, whose research was based on the issues of *Eiga Kaihō*, *Eiga Kōjō* and other journals preserved in his own collection. My own research is deeply indebted to Makino's guidance as I worked through the extant publications of the Federation in his collection.
26. Namiki, *Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Purokino) Zenshi,* 39–44.
27. Kishi Matsuo, *Nihon Eiga Yōshikikō* (Thoughts on Japanese film style) (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō, 1937), 30. The *X* in the final sentence of this quotation is evidence of censorship, a phenomenon I discuss later in this chapter.
28. Tendency films were fiction films with narratives that critiqued capitalism; they were apparently named after the German *tendenzfilm*; see Iwasaki Akira, "Atarashii Media no Tenkai" (The evolution of new media), *Shisō* 624 (June 1976): 248.
29. Hazumi Tsuneo, *Eiga Gojūnenshi* (Fifty years of film history) (Tokyo: Masu Shobō, 1942), 346. Namiki quotes from Hazumi's footnote, but, significantly, does not acknowledge the source of Hazumi's negativity (*Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei [Purokino] Zenshi,* 267).
30. George M. Beckmann and Okubo Genji, *The Japanese Communist Party 1922–1945* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1969), 154.
31. This after one previous name change—to Puroretaria Gekijō Eigahan, or Proletarian Theater Film Unit—when Trunk Theater lost many members due to the earlier Progei/Rōgei split.
32. At this point, NAPF reorganized with the same initials but a new name: Zen Nippon Musansha Geijutsu Dantai Kyōgikai (All Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts Organizations).
33. To be precise, the "Prokino" abbreviation was not used until after the group's second convention.

34. Kamimura, "Nippon Puroretaria Eiga Hattatsu-shi," 42.
35. Ibid., 29.
36. Iwasaki Akira and Murayama Tomoyoshi, eds., *Puroretaria Eiga no Chishiki* (Proletarian film knowledge) (Tokyo: Naigaisha, 1932); Matsuzaki Keiji, ed., *Puroretaria Eiga Undō no Tenbō* (Prospects of the proletarian film movement) (Tokyo: Daihōkaku, 1930); Shinkō Eigasha, ed., *Puroretaria Eiga Undō Riron* (Theory of the proletarian film movement) (Tokyo: Tenjinsha, 1930).
37. Because the majority of film scholars do not have access to Japanese-language texts, it is worthwhile to provide a translation of the table of contents from one Prokino journal here. These were hefty, serious publications by any standard, and those that have survived are more impressive than most Western film publications from the same period. Here is the table of contents from the March 1931 issue of *Shinkō Eiga:*

Film Story: *Turksib*	Iwasaki Akira
Agitprop Films of the Civil War Period	Sugimoto Ryōkichi
Catholic Film Internationale	trans. Takahashi Norihiko
Film and Class: Mainly on Practical Problems of Proletarian Filmmaking	Daitō Goroku
NAPF Film League: Collection for Photography Expenses	
Prospects of 1930s Directors	Taki Sōji
Comments on Current Films	Iwasaki Akira
Investigating the February Issues of Various Magazines	Matsuzaki Keiji
Special Section	
Korean Proletarian Film Movement	Ueda Isamu
Various Tendencies in the Korean Cinema	Im Hwa
Until the XX of the Film Support Society (San'eikai)	Kim Hyong-young
Shanghai! Photo Story	The Editors
Job Search Strategies for Technicians: Shochiku's Tsujimoto Hirotarō	Takeda Tadaya
What Kind of Places Have Been Censored?	Nakajima Shin
Hearing the Opinion of a Studio Head	Kimura Kazuma
General Remarks on the Techniques of Photography, Part 4	Horino Masao
From the Workplace	
Pamphleting and Being Fired	Izumo Susumu
Diary from a Snowy Location	Ishii Masaru
Tendency Films from the Perspective of a *Benshi*	Kaku Otoko
Shinkō Eiga Discussion	
Storylike Studio News	L.M.N.
Record of a Theater Manager's Thoughts on Prokino	
Street Walking Music (Scenario)	Hatta Moto
Film Criticism	
I. *Sweat*	
Unexpected Ending	Nakajima Shin
Impression of *Sweat*	Sasa Genjū
Trick Film/Hypocrisy/Reaction	Ikeda Yoshio
In Particular, Its Reactionary Quality	Matsuzaki Keiji
Celebrated *Sweat*	Takida Izuru
II. *What Made Her Do It?* (Group Criticism)	Sasa Genjū, Murayama Tomoyoshi, Nakajima Shin, Kitamura Tetsuo, Iwasaki Tarō, et al.
III. Japanese Film Criticism	
Mother	Daitō Goroku
IV. Foreign Film Criticism	
The Virginian	Sasa Genjū
Great Plane Formation	Sasa Genjū
What Made the Studio Head Do It?	
Shinkō Eiga News	
Shinkō Eiga Club	
The Next Film of Each Studio's Directors	
Projector	

Hometown (Nikkatsu)
Woman (Kawai)
Small-Gauge News
Establishment of the Film Critics Association
Preview of Next Issue
Editors' Afterword

38. Makino has written a detailed account of this passage in Prokino's history: Makino Mamoru, "1930 Nen, Eiga Hihyōka Kyōkai no Tanjō to Hōkai ni Kan Suru Shōshiteki Kenkyū: 1" (A bibliographic study on the birth and collapse of the Film Critics Association [organized in 1930]: Part 1), *Kawasakishi Shimin Myūjiamu* (Bulletin of the Kawasaki City Museum) 4 (1991): 15–84; Makino Mamoru, "1930 Nen, Eiga Hihyōka Kyōkai no Tanjō to Hōkai ni Kan Suru Shōshiteki Kenkyū: 2," *Kawasakishi Shimin Myūjiamu* 5 (1992): 9–72; Makino Mamoru, "1930 Nen, Eiga Hihyōka Kyōkai no Tanjō to Hōkai ni Kan Suru Shōshiteki Kenkyū: 3," *Kawasakishi Shimin Myūjiamu* 6 (1993): 86–148.
39. *Eiga Hyōron* (June 1930), quoted in Makino, "*Shinkō Eiga*," 9.
40. Murayama, "Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi," 3–24.
41. Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino, "Towards a Third Cinema," in *Movies and Methods*, ed. Bill Nichols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 51–52.
42. Iwasaki Akira, "Eiga/Ideorojii" (Cinema/ideology), in *Puroretaria Eiga Undō no Tenbō* (Prospects of the proletarian film movement), ed. Matsuzaki Keiji (Tokyo: Daihōkaku, 1930), 129–42.
43. Actually, he called them the *chindonya* for business; *chindonya* are itinerant bands dressed in period costume who are hired to play at the openings of new businesses and similar events. Sasa Genjū, "Eiga Hihyo Tomen no Mondai" (The current problems of film criticism), in *Puroretaria Eiga Undō no Tenbō* (Prospects of the proletarian film movement), ed. Matsuzaki Keiji (Tokyo: Daihōkaku, 1930), 181–94.
44. Iwasaki, "Eiga/Ideorojii," 129.
45. For a brief history, see Yamagishi Kazuaki, "Senzen-Sengo no Mē Dē Eiga" (May Day films before and after the war), *Kiroku Eiga* 2, no. 5 (May 1959): 10–11.
46. Namiki, *Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Purokino) Zenshi*, 76.
47. Satō, *Nihon Eigashi*, 1:307. It is also significant that Prokino tended toward nonfiction filmmaking, whereas tendency films were straightforward fictional narratives.
48. At least this is the reason Prokino members provided to explain why the makers of tendency films became Prokino sympathizers.
49. Takada Tamotsu, "Purokino Tomo no Kai ni Tsuite" (On friends of Prokino), *Puroretaria Eiga* 2, no. 7 (July 1930): 82–83.
50. Ibid., 83.
51. Namiki, *Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Purokino) Zenshi*, 104–5.
52. Iwasaki, *Nihon Eiga Shishi*, 36.
53. The music league, PR, had yet to start producing its own records; later, Prokino borrowed a set of records of German worker songs from a student who had recently returned from a study trip in Germany. These provided the music backgrounds for films after the third Prokino convention.
54. Iwasaki, *Nihon Eiga Shishi*, 58.
55. Namiki, *Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Purokino) Zenshi*, 231.
56. Ibid. The film coproduced by Tokyo and Osaka was *1932 Tokyo Osaka May Day*.
57. "Shakai Undō no Jōkyō," no. 3 (Home Ministry internal document, 1931), 435–37.
58. "Shakai Undō no Jōkyō" (Home Ministry internal document, 1929), 991.
59. The censors kept 155.5 meters of the 370-meter film, according to Namiki, *Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Purokino) Zenshi*, 144.
60. Tozuka Tadao, "Keikō Eiga ni Okeru Manga" (Animation in the tendency film), *Amachura Eiga* (Amateur film) 5, no. 6 (December 1933): 286–87.
61. *Ken'etsu Jihō*, 1932, quoted in Satō, *Nihon Eigashi*, 1:308.
62. Tanaka Jun'ichirō, "Eiga Ken'etsu no Kenkyū: 1" (Study of film censorship: 1), *Shinkō Eiga* 1, no. 2 (October 1929): 94–101; Tanaka Jun'ichirō, "Eiga Ken'etsu no Kenkyū: 2," *Shinkō Eiga* 1, no. 3 (November 1929): 78–81; Tanaka Jun'ichirō, "Eiga Ken'etsu no Kenkyū: 3," *Shinkō Eiga* 2, no. 1 (January 1930): 108–11, 49.
63. *"Ajia no arashi" (Storm over Asia), Puroretaria Eiga* 2, no. 9 (October 1930): 8–14.
64. "Purokino Shinsakuhin wa Doko ga Kirareta Ka" (Where were Prokino's new films cut?), *Prokino* 1, no. 2 (July 1932): 32.
65. A reel of the extant films was created for screenings sometime in the late 1970s. It includes *12th Annual Tokyo May Day, Earth, Yamasen, Kokubetsushiki Tokyo, Yamasen Rōnōsō, Sports* (Supōtsu; produced by the Waseda University circle), and *All Lines* (Zensen). The reel is available for viewing at the Kawasaki City Museum and the Kyoto Museum of Art.

66. Mary Ryan, "The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order," in *The New Cultural History,* ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 131–53.
67. Iwasaki's introduction to the film appears in a special issue of *Puroretaria Eiga* published for the screening: Iwasaki Akira, *"Asufaruto no michi" (Asphalt Road), Puroretaria Eiga* 2, no. 10 (November/December 1930): 28–29. The script for the film appears in the same issue (65–69), which also has a few stills from the film. For a nice postwar description, see Iwasaki Akira, "Kiroku Eigaron" (On documentary film), *Eiga Hyōron* 13, no. 12 (November 1956): 21–25.
68. Noto et al., "Purokin no Katsudō," 96.
69. *"Asufaruto no michi* ni Tsuite" (On *Asphalt Road*), *Puroretaria Eiga* 3, no. 1 (January 1931): 78–79.
70. Kurahara Korehito, "Puroretaria Geijutsu Undō no Soshiki Mondai" (The organizational problem of the proletarian art movement), *Nappu* (June 1931), quoted in Makino, *"Shinkō Eiga,"* 17.
71. *Shisō Chōsa Shiryō* (Monbushō) 15 (July 1932): 124; Gerow and Makino, "Documentarists of Japan."
72. Police records indicate that strengthened censorship and increased harrassment were direct responses to perceptions on the part of the police that Prokino was drifting even further left. "Shakai Undō no Jōkyō," no. 4 (Home Ministry internal document, 1932), 544.
73. "Tokubetsu Kōtō Keisatsu Shiryō" (Special secret police materials) (Home Ministry internal document, December 1929), 113, 151; "Shakai Undō no Jōkyō" (Home Ministry internal document, 1929), 990, 1005–6, 1009; "Shakai Undō no Jōkyō," no. 3 (Home Ministry internal document, 1931), 422, 545; "Shakai Undō no Jōkyō," no. 5 (Home Ministry internal document, 1933), 491.
74. "Puroretaria Bunka Undō ni Tsuite no Kenkyū" (Study of the proletarian culture movement), *Shihō Kenkyū* (Judicature research) 28, no. 9 (March 1940): 226–36. A variation of this chart appears in Namiki, *Nihon Puroretaria Eiga Dōmei (Purokino) Zenshi,* 183, as well as in "Shakai Undō no Jōkyō," no. 4, 545, with small variations. This makes one wonder where the chart comes from in the first place.
75. Noto Setsuo, interview by author, 1 February 2000.
76. "Giseisha Ichiranhyō" (List of victims), *Eiga Kurabu* 11 (28 July 1932): 2; "Giseisha Ichiranhyō," *Eiga Kurabu* 13 (5 November 1932): 1.
77. Atsugi Taka, "Deai to Wakare" (Meeting and parting), in *Shōwa Shoki Sayoku Eiga Zasshi: Bekkan* (Early Shōwa left-wing film journals: Supplement) (Tokyo: Senki Fukkokuban Gyōkai, 1981), 31–33.

3. A Hardening of Style

1. "Nyūsu Eiga Zadankai" (News film discussion), *Eiga to Gijutsu* 2, no. 3 (August 1935): 152–53.
2. Ōuchi Hidekuni, "Nyūsu Eiga no Omoide" (Memories of newsreels), *Film Center* 42 (14 September 1977): 64–65.
3. Ōta Hamatarō, "Shanhai Jihen Satsueiki: Shisen o Koeta Satsueihan Shuki" (A record of photographing the Shanghai Incident: Memo on the film unit that crossed the life-or-death situation), *Eiga no Tomo* (May 1932): 132–35.
4. Shimizu Akira, "Nyūsu Eiga Senmonkan no Haishutsu" (The continual appearance of newsreel specialty theaters), *Film Center* 42 (14 September 1977): 15. Ōuchi also mentions the *sukuriin gotaimen* ("Nyūsu Eiga no Omoide").
5. The last film in this list was made by Tsuburaya Eiji, of *Godzilla* and *Ultraman* fame. He also directed a later high-profile *henshū eiga* called *Japan of the Imperial Way* (Kōdō Nippon; 1939), which is available at the Japanese National Archives along with several other of these titles.
6. The Photo Chemical Laboratory (PCL), one of the first producers of documentary, was probably the first to produce edited films in the early 1930s. See Iwamoto and Saiki, *Kinema no Seishun,* 364.
7. Iwamoto Kenji has written an impressively researched historiography of the concept of editing in Japanese cinema: "Nihon ni Okeru Montāju Riron no Shōkai" (An introduction to montage theory in Japan), *Hikaku Bungaku Nenshi* (October 1974): 67–85. This article provided useful background for this discussion.
8. Suzuki Shigeyoshi, *"Sangatsu tōka, Kore issen, Mamore ōzora:* Henshū Eiga no Koto" (*March 10, This One War, Defend It, the Great Sky*: On edited films), *Film Center* 11 (18 January 1973): 10.
9. See Tanaka Jun'ichirō, *Nihon Kyōiku Eiga no Hattatsu-shi* (A developmental history of the Japanese education film) (Tokyo: Katatsumurisha, 1979), 77–79; Yamane Sadao, *"Lifeline of the Sea,"* in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 197–98.
10. See, for example, "Hanareta Kyodan wa Nani to Hibiku" (How did the huge projectile that was set off reverberate?), *Katsuei* 64 (June 1933): 14, 16.
11. Mizuno Shinko, testimony, in *The Tokyo War Crimes Trial,* ed. R. John Pritchard and Sonia Magbanua Zaide (New York: Garland, 1981), 18, 614–18, 622.

12. Mizuno Sei [Shinkō], "Tatte Kokuso o Katameru ga Kokka no Kyumu" (The present urgency to strengthen the national foundation), *Katsuei* 64 (June 1933): 14.
13. "Hanareta Kyodan wa Nani to Hibiku," 14. Other interesting articles describing the film's initial reception include "'Hijōji Nippon' no Koto" (On *Japan in Time of Crisis*), *Katsuei* 64 (June 1933): 18–19; "Kakumiya Denka Osoroide Tairan" (Each prince views at gatherings), *Katsuei* 65 (July 1933): 14–19. For the screening schedule, see "Nishi Nippon Oyobi Taiwan, Senman Fūkirihi To" (Release dates for western Japan, Korea, and Manchuria), *Katsuei* 65 (July 1933): 18–19.
14. "Nyūsu Eiga Zadankai," 144–59, 190–92.
15. Yoshimura Furuhiko [Terada Torahiko], "Nyūsu Eiga to Shinbun Kiji" (News film and newspaper articles), *Eiga Hyōron* 14, no. 1 (January 1933): 194–96. This article was also published in Terada Torahiko, *Terada Torahiko Zuihitsushū,* vol. 4 (Tokyo: Iwanami Bunko 101, 1993), 25–29.
16. See Kubota Tatsuo, *Bunka Eiga no Hōhōron* (The methodology of the culture film) (Kyoto: Daiichi Geibunsha, 1940), 23; Ueno Kōzō, "Eiga ni Okeru Geijutsu to Kagaku 1" (Science and art in the cinema, part 1), *Nihon Eiga* 5, no. 2 (February 1940): 31, 33.
17. Terada Torahiko, "Eiga no Sekaizō" (Cinema's world image) in *Terada Torahiko Zuihitsushū,* vol. 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Bunko 100, 1993), 133–41.
18. Terada Torahiko, "Kamera o Sagete" (Carrying a camera), in *Terada Torahiko Zuihitsushū,* vol. 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Bunko 100, 1993), 38–44.
19. Terada, "Eiga no Sekaizō," 25–26.
20. Ibid., 27.
21. In his discussion of Torahiko, Satō Tadao makes a similar point, noting that Kamei Fumio would rely on these emerging conventions to insert supplementary readings into films such as *Shanghai* (1937). Satō Tadao, *Nihon Eiga Rironshi* (The history of Japanese film theory) (Tokyo: Hyōronsha, 1977), 75–76.
22. Ōmura Einosuke, Iida Shinbi, Shimizu Chiyota, et al., "Bunka Eiga Purodūsā Zadankai" (Culture film producers' discussion), *Eiga Junpō* (11 May 1941): 35–44.
23. H. D. Harootunian, "The Problem of Taishō," in *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy,* ed. Bernard S. Silberman and H. D. Harootunian (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), 16–17.
24. An interesting discussion of the etymology of the word *bunka* appears in Tessa Morris-Suzuki, "The Invention and Reinvention of 'Japanese Culture,'" *Journal of Asian Studies* 54, no. 3 (August 1995): 759–80.
25. "Eiga Yōgoshū" (Glossary of film terms), in Iwasaki and Murayama, *Puroretaria Eiga no Chishiki,* 209.
26. Imamura Taihei, *Kiroku Eigaron* (On documentary film) (Tokyo: Dai'ichi Geibunsha, 1940), 52–57.
27. Nishimura, *Kogata Eiga,* 161–62.
28. Mizoguchi Kenji, Tasaka Tomotaka, Uchida Tomu, et al., "Bunka Eiga Yomoyama Zadankai" (A talk about various aspects of the culture film), *Bunka Eiga* 1, no. 3 (March 1941): 32–38.
29. Iwasaki Akira, *Eigaron* (On cinema) (Tokyo: Mikasa Shobō, 1936), 170–71.
30. Shirai Shigeru, "Kameraman Jinsei" (Cameraman life), in *Kinema no Seishun* (Japanese cinema in its youth), ed. Iwamoto Kenji and Saiki Tomonori (Tokyo: Libroport, 1988), 75.
31. A number of Mantetsu documentaries are available for viewing on video at the Kawasaki City Museum.
32. Miyanaga Tsugiyo, "Mantetsu Eiga to Akutagawa Kōzō" (Mantetsu films and Akutagawa Kōzō), *Film Center* 11 (18 January 1973): 18–19.
33. In addition to a vast amount of contemporary literature, two of the best recent histories of Man'ei are Tsuboi Yō, "Manshū Eiga Kyōkai no Kaisō" (Reflections on the Manchurian Motion Picture Association), *Eigashi Kenkyū* 19 (1984): 1–103; Yamaguchi Takeshi, *Maboroshi no Kinema: Man'ei* (Mysterious cinema: Man'ei) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1989). There is also an interesting discussion of Man'ei in *Hōsho Gekkan* 14, no. 6 (June 1998); this special issue includes contributions by Makino Mamoru and veterans of Man'ei and their families.
34. Gregory Kasza has written the most complete consideration of the Film Law in English; his work is particularly useful for placing the Film Law in relation to the controls instituted over related media. Gregory J. Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan 1918–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). See also Shimizu Akira, "War and Cinema in Japan," in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 7–57.
35. Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan,* 232.
36. Quoted in Shimizu, "War and Cinema in Japan," 32–33; Shimizu's translation.
37. Ibid., 32; Shimizu's translation.
38. Naimushō Keihōkyoku, *Eiga Ken'etsu nenpō* (1941), 103, quoted in Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan,* 240.

39. For general information, see Ōuchi, "Nyūsu Eiga no Omoide"; *Nippon Nyūsu (Nippon News)* (Tokyo: Nippon Eigasha, 1943); *Nihon Nyūsu Eigashi* (History of Japanese news film) (Tokyo: Mainichi Shuppansha, 1980). For a summary of the industry just before the amalgamation, see "Tōgō Chokuzen no Bunka Eigakai" (The culture film world immediately before unification), *Eiga Junpō* (1 December 1941): 28–30.
40. Furuno Inosuke et al., "Nippon Eiga-sha no Shimei" (The mission of Nippon Film Company), *Eiga Junpō* (11 November 1942): 24.
41. Tsuchiya Hitoshi, "Nyūsu Eiga no Seisaku Jōkyō" (The production conditions of news films), *Eiga Junpō* (21 May 1943): 18.
42. Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan,* 246.
43. Ibid., 243.
44. "*Roshin no ato* no Seisaku ni Sai Shi" (At the time of the production of *After Rapid Progress*), *Asahi Eiga Geppō* (Asahi film monthly report), 3 (5 November 1940): 1 (Makino Collection). See also Suzuki Shigeyoshi, "Nyūsu Eiga Hattatsushi" (A history of the development of the newsreel), *Film Center* 12 (10 February 1973): 22–23.
45. Nagata Shin, "Bunka Eiga Seisaku no Kadai" (The topic of culture film production), *Der Film* (Tokyo) 11 (December 1939): 22–23.
46. Itō Yasuo, in Tsumura Hideo, Fuwa Suketoshi, Itō Yasuo, et al., "Nyūsu Eiga o Kataru Zadankai" (Roundtable on the news film), *Nihon Eiga* 5, no. 2 (November 1940): 173.
47. Furuno et al., "Nippon Eiga-sha no Shimei," 22.
48. See, for example, Tsuchiya Sekizō, "Kokunai Taisei Kyoka to Nippon Eigasha no Shimei" (The strengthening of domestic attitude and the mission of Nippon Film Company), *Eiga Junpō* (11 November 1943): 13.
49. Tsuchiya Hitoshi, "Nyūsu Eiga no Kikaku to Henshū" (The planning and editing of news film), *Eiga Junpō* (11 November 1942): 28–29.
50. Matsuo Yōji, "Nyūsu Eiga Kō" (Thoughts on newsreels), *Eiga to Gijutsu* 2, no. 6 (December 1935): 351.
51. Kamimura Shūkichi, "Purokino Nyūsuriruhan no Katsudō" (Prokino newsreel unit's activities), in *Puroretaria Eiga Undō no Tenbō* (Prospects of the proletarian film movement), ed. Matsuzaki Keiji (Tokyo: Daihōkaku, 1930), 166.
52. Recall Iwasaki's early quote: "They understand us!" The parallels between the language and thought of Marxism and the language and thought of its archrivals can be traced back to the Shinjinkai.
53. Fuwa Suketoshi, "Bunka Eiga no Shimei to Hōkō" (Culture film's mission and direction), *Nippon Eiga* 4, no. 10 (October 1939): 24–27.
54. Fuwa Suketoshi, *Eiga Kyōiku no Shōso* (Various aspects of film education) (Tokyo: Shakai Kyōiku Kyōkai, 1938); Fuwa Suketoshi, *Eigahō Kaisetsu* (Explanatory notes for the film law) (Tokyo: Dai Nippon Eiga Kyōkai, 1941). The latter volume's chapter on *bunka eiga* and *jiji eiga* (73–85) is a useful starting place for researchers interested in the impact of the Film Law. In addition to Fuwa's notes, the book includes official documents pertaining to the subject at hand.
55. Fuwa, "Bunka Eiga no Shimei to Hōkō," 24.
56. Ibid., 26.
57. Ibid., 25.
58. Ibid., 26.
59. David Bordwell offers a short analysis of this film in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988), 261.
60. Tanaka, *Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi,* 2:143–47.
61. I am indebted to Edwin Cranston for pointing out this name's reference to songs 10 through 14 of the *Kojiki,* and I have used his translation from *A Waka Anthology,* vol. 1, *The Gem-Glistening Cup,* trans. Edwin A. Cranston (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993), 15–16.
62. "'Uchiteshitomamu' Eiga Undō no Tenkai" (The development of the 'shoot to stop' film movement), *Eiga Junpō* (1 March 1943): 15 (advertisement on 14).
63. Imamura Taihei, "Bunka Eiga no Susumu Beki Michi" (The road culture films should follow), *Eiga Junpō* (21 September 1943): 8–11.
64. *Shitsumu Benran* (Office handbook), Nippon Eigasha internal document, October 1943 (Makino Collection).
65. "Gunki Hoji Narabi ni Gun Kankei Sagyōsha ni Kan Suru Chūi Jiko" (List of matters requiring special attention for employees working on military matters and for protecting military equipment), Riken M.P. Co. internal document, May 1942 (Makino Collection, Riken File 8).
66. Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan,* 234–36.
67. Iwasaki Akira, *Nihon Gendai Shi Taikei: Eigashi* (Outline of modern Japanese history: Film history) (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shinposha, 1961), 211–12, quoted in ibid., 236.
68. "Dai Ichiji Senshō Shukugashiki Jidai" (Agenda for celebration of the first battle), Riken M.P. Co. internal memo, 18 February 1942 (Makino Collection, Riken File F9).

69. "Dai Ichiji Senshō Shukuga Narabi Daitōa Sensō Kansui Kigan Kōgun Kanshasai Daikōshin Jidai" (Agenda for great march of appreciation for the imperial troops, prayer for completion of the great East-Asian war and celebration of the first battle), Riken M.P. Co. internal memo, 18 February 1942 (Makino Collection, Riken File F9).
70. The Makino Collection Riken files include a set of the two cards (an agenda for the funeral was attached to the funeral invitation and circulated in the company). "Shasō ni Saishi Goaisatsu" (Notice of company funeral), Nippon Eigasha official announcement/invitation (Makino Collection, Riken File F8).
71. "Sange no Eiga Hōdō Senshi o Itamu" (Mourning the film journalism fallen flowers), *Bunka Eiga* 2, no. 6 (June 1942): 32–33. The first death of a cameraman at war occurred early on; Tanaka Jun'ichirō reports on a casualty during the Sino-Japanese War in *Nihon Kyōiku Eiga no Hattatsu-shi,* 26–27.
72. Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature in the Meiji Era—Fiction* (New York: Henry Holt, 1984), 918.
73. For a translation of the film's script, see R. John Pritchard and Sonia Magbanua Zaide, eds., *The Tokyo War Crimes Trial* (New York: Garland, 1981), 1176–79, 3155–89; for discussions of *Japan in Time of Crisis,* see 1156–75, 1180–211, 3189–201, 18613–627.
74. Mizuno, testimony in ibid., 18622.
75. Ibid., 1182.
76. Mizuno, testimony in ibid., 18619–620.
77. Mizuno Sei [Shinkō]. "Tatte Kokuso o Katameru ga Kokka no Kyūmu" (Today's pressing need to strengthen the national foundation), *Katsuei* 64 (June 1933): 12–15.
78. Quoted in Shimano Sōitsu, "Kōdō Eigakai in Okeru Eiga Kanshō no Gakunenteki, Hattenteki Keiro e no Ichi Kōsatsu" (Consideration of film appreciation in terms of grade and development process in assembly screenings), *Eiga Kyōiku* 125 (July 1938): 42–43. The first-grade child's response was printed entirely in katakana.
79. For example, see Satō Tadao, *Kinema to Hōsei* (Cinema and gunshots) (Tokyo: Libroport, 1985), 106.
80. Ruth Fulton Benedict, "Japanese Films: A Phase of Psychological Warfare" (RS53/2), Office of War Information, Foreign Morale Analysis Division, Washington D.C., 30 March 1944, 14–15.
81. Michael Renov, "Warring Images: Stereotype and American Representations of the Japanese, 1941–1991," in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Context,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 95–118.
82. Ueno Toshiya, "The Other and the Machine," trans. Maya Todeschini, in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Context,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 85.
83. Here and below I quote from the translation of the film's sound track made by the Tokyo Trial translators. A more technically accurate translation might be possible, but I like the 1946 translators' archaisms, which echo Araki's own style of speech.
84. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 34–36.
85. Maruyama Masao saw *Japan in Time of Crisis* when it was released, and he wrote that this discussion by Araki helped him conceptualize his influential writings on wartime Japan. He even included versions of the animated intertitles shown here in Figures 8 and 9. Maruyama Masao, *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 21–23.
86. Asao Tadao, "Eiga Haikyū to Kokudo Keikaku" (Film distribution and national planning), *Eiga Junpō* (11 November 1942): 39–46.
87. Bill Nichols, "The Voice of Documentary," *Film Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (spring 1983): 17–30.
88. See Pritchard and Zaide, *The Tokyo War Crimes Trial,* 3191–99.
89. Tanaka, *Nihon Eiga Hattatsu-shi,* 3:93–95.
90. Quoted in ibid., 94.
91. Imamura Taihei, "Kyōnen no Bunka Eiga" (Last year's culture films), *Eiga Junpō* (11 March 1942), quoted in Ueno, "The Other and the Machine," 79.
92. Imamura, "Kyōnen no Bunka Eiga," quoted in Ueno, "The Other and the Machine," 80.
93. Darrell William Davis, *Picturing Japaneseness: Monumental Style, National Identity, Japanese Film* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), esp. 39, 45, 92.

4. Stylish Charms

1. Iwasaki, *Eigaron,* 167–68.
2. Mizoguchi et al., "Bunka Eiga Yomoyama Zadankai," 33–34.
3. Ibid., 36.
4. I have recorded the reminiscenses of some of the veteran American soldiers who participated in

these scenes in an extensive treatment of this unusual film; see Abé Mark Nornes, "Nippon . . . Philippines . . . Peace," in *Symposium on Geraldo de Leon,* ed. Ishizaka Kenji (Tokyo: Japan Foundation ASEAN Culture Center, 1995), 63–79. See also Abé Mark Nornes, *"Dawn of Freedom,"* in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 235–41.

5. Satō Tadao provides a good discussion of Imamura's work in *Nihon Eiga Rironshi,* 153–75, 200–204. I am indebted to him both for his writings and for his helpful discussions about Imamura's work. See also Irie Yoshirō, "Imamura Taihei Shikiron: Sono Riron to Dokuso" (On Imamura Taihei: The originality of his theory), *Eigagaku* 7 (1993): 48–65.
6. For samples of Imamura's writing in English, see Imamura Taihei, "The Japanese Spirit as It Appears in Movies," in *Japanese Popular Culture,* ed. Hidetoshi Katō (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle, 1959) (reprinted from *Shisō no Kagaku* 5, no. 2 [1950]); Imamura Taihei, "Japanese Art and the Animated Cartoon," *Quarterly of Film, Radio, and Television* 7, no. 3 (spring 1953): 217–22.
7. Sugiyama Heiichi, *Imamura Taihei* (Tokyo: Libroport, 1990), 7.
8. Imamura Taihei, "Sensō Kiroku Eiga ni Nozomu Mono" (My aspirations for the war documentary), *Bunka Eiga* 3, no. 1 (January 1942): 21.
9. See, for example, Imamura Taihei, "Sensō Eiga ni Tsuite" (On war films), *Dōmei Gurafu* (June 1942): 465–68; see also his book *Sensō to Eiga* (War and cinema) (Tokyo: Daiichi Geibunsha, 1942).
10. Sasaki gave it a different name: Bela Balasz, *Eiga Bigaku to Eiga Shakaigaku* (Film aesthetics and film sociology), trans. Sasaki Norio (Tokyo: Ōraisha, 1932).
11. Imamura, *Kiroku Eigaron,* 47.
12. Ibid., 40–41.
13. Iwasaki, quoted in Sugiyama, *Imamura Taihei,* 179.
14. In the end, Sasaki Norio probably describes Imamura's position best, placing him somewhere between socialist realism and naturalism. Ibid., 176.
15. Imamura, *Kiroku Eigaron,* quoted in Satō, *Nihon Eiga Rironshi,* 202.
16. Imamura Taihei, "Eiga Geijutsu no Seikaku" (The character of film art), *Eiga Kai* 2, no. 5 (June 1939): 40–41.
17. Imamura Taihei, "Seisen" (Holy war), *Eiga Kai* 2, no. 4 (January 1939): 88.
18. Imamura Taihei, "Kokumin Eiga no Mondai" (The problem of national films), *Dōmei Gurafu* (February 1942): 163. A largely revised version of this article appears in Imamura, *Sensō to Eiga,* 105–16.
19. Ueda Hiroshi, Imamura Taihei, Kanō Ryūichi, Iida Shinbi, Kuwano Shigeru, et al., "Sensō Kiroku Eiga no Hyōgen ni Tsuite (2)" (On the representation of war documentary [part 2]), in *Dai Nikai Nippon Eiga Kenkyūkai Kiroku* (Record of the second Japanese cinema study group), Nippon Eigasha internal publication, 28 May 1943, 90 (Makino Collection).
20. Imamura Taihei, "Eizō no Riron: 1" (Theory of image: part 1), *Shisō* (April 1975); Imamura Taihei, "Eizō no Riron: 2," *Shisō* (May 1975). These articles have been republished in book form: Imamura Taihei, *Eiga no Me: Bunji kara Eizō no Bunka E* (The film eye: From letter to image culture) (Tokyo: Kōwadō, 1992).
21. Imamura Taihei, "Kaisō no 1930 Nendai: Shū to Shite Eiga o Jiku Ni" (Thoughts on the 1930s: Based primarily on the movies), *Tenbō* 163 (July 1972), quoted in Makino Mamoru, *"Eiga Kai* ni Tsuite" (On *Eiga Kai*), in *Senzen Eizō Riron Zasshi Shūsei,* vol. 12 (Tokyo: Yumani Shobō, 1989), 6.
22. Iwasaki Akira praised Imamura's first book highly, but after the war he used Imamura's writing to criticize the *yarase* of the war documentary. In the course of the debate that ensued between the two critics, Imamura renounced film criticism and turned to literary subjects, such as the writing of Shiga Naoya. The debate began with Iwasaki Akira, "Kiroku Eigaron" (On documentary film), *Eiga Hyōron* (December 1956): 26–49.
23. Imamura Taihei, Sekino Yoshio, Aihara Hideji, Shirai Shigeru, et al., "Eiga no Shakaiteki Eikyō ni Tsuite (1)" (On the social influence of cinema [part 1]), in *Dai Rokkai Eiga Kenkyūkai* (The sixth cinema study group), Nippon M.P. Co. internal publication, 21 September 1943, 24–26 (Makino Collection).
24. All of the data reported for Toho are drawn from "Sakuhin Hankyō Chōsa no Sōgō Kentō" (General examination of investigations of film response), in *Fukiri Sakuhin Chōsa Shorui* (Investigative papers on film releases), Toho M.P. Co. internal memo, stamped "secret," 31 July 1944, n.p. (Makino Collection).
25. Peter High devotes an entire section in his impressive book about the war cinema to these women, often referred to in Japanese women's magazines as "military mothers" *(gunkoku no hahatachi).* Peter High, *Teikoku no Ginmaku* (The imperial screen) (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 1995), 365–69.
26. Ibid., 318–19.
27. It is interesting to note that the scene described here is missing from the captured copy of this film stored in the U.S. National Archives.

28. There are probably more ways to describe the violence. I explore this issue in a comparative mode in "Cherry Trees and Corpses: Representations of Violence from World War II," in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 146–61.
29. Marsha Kinder, *Blood Cinema: The Reconstruction of National Identity in Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
30. Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 143–45.
31. As George H. Roeder Jr. amply demonstrates, this itself must be historicized, because the brutal violence of films such as *With the Marines in Tarawa* was at least partly the result of a top-down attempt within U.S. government information agencies to brace war-weary Americans for the sacrifices necessary to finish off the war. George H. Roeder Jr., *The Censored War: American Visual Experience during World War II* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993).
32. For more information on Magee and Fitch's footage, including an in-depth historiography and close textual analysis, see Abé Mark Nornes, "Civilian Victims of Military Brutality," in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 252–58.
33. "These Atrocities Explain Jap Defeat," *Life,* 16 May 1938, 14.
34. Quoted in Pritchard and Zaide, *The Tokyo War Crimes Trial,* 4477.
35. Shirai, *Kamera to Jinsei,* 137–38.
36. Shimizu Shunji, *Eiga Jimaku Gojūnen* (Fifty years of film subtitling) (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō, 1985), 198. See also "Nankin Shingekichū ni Okita Nihongun no Bōgyaku" (The atrocities of Japanese soldiers during the invasion of Nanking), in *Nitchū Sensō Nichi Bei Chū Hōdō Kameraman no Kiroku* (Record of Japanese-Chinese-American cameramen of the China War), ed. Hiratsuka Masao (Tokyo: Bōeisha, 1956), 50–51.
37. Kinder, *Blood Cinema,* 150.
38. Bill Nichols, *Representing Reality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 231.
39. Shirai (*Kamera to Jinsei,* 138) and Imamura ("The Japanese Spirit," 149) both mention this scene in passing.
40. These lyrics are originally from Ōtomono Yakamochi's *Man'yōshū.*
41. Tsurumi Shunsuke, *An Intellectual History of Wartime Japan 1931–1945* (London: KPI, 1986), 75.
42. Satō Tadao, *Currents in Japanese Cinema,* trans. Gregory Barrett (Tokyo: Kōdansha International, 1982), 103. In Japanese, see Satō Tadao, "Taiheiyō Sensō Eiga Ribaibaru Jōeiron" (On the revival screenings of Pacific War films), *Kinema Junpō* (1968): 82–84.
43. Gilles Deleuze, *Masochism: An Interpretation of Coldness and Cruelty,* trans. Jean McNeil (New York: George Braziller, 1971), 59–60, quoted in Kinder, *Blood Cinema,* 149.
44. This is one of Davis's archetypal texts for monumental style; see *Picturing Japaneseness,* 99.
45. Makijima Teiichi, "Nankin E" (To Nanking), *Eiga to Gijutsu* 7, no. 2 (February 1938): 105–7. See also the article by Asahi's Hayashida Shigeo, "Hakushi Sensen Jūgun Nisshi" (Diary of a soldier deployed at the North China front), *Eiga to Gijutsu* 7, no. 2 (February 1938): 107–9. It is also worth noting the Japanese words for the English terms *motherland* and *fatherland*: *bokoku* (mother + country) and *sokoku* (ancestor + country). Here again the father is absent—sent back to the past—and the emphasis is on the mother figure.
46. High, *Teikoku no Ginmaku,* 27.
47. The presence of massacre violence in Japanese public discourse is stronger than the American news media suggest. American documentaries and news reports that have argued that Japan continues to disavow the massacre violence of the war have inevitably been informed by reporters who have gone to Harajuku on a Sunday and asked the greased Elvi and their fans if they know about the Nanking Massacre. This is the wrong question, asked in the wrong place, and then speciously generalized to represent the "national attitude." It is likely that Japanese teenagers know more about World War II than many American adults. We must search for new ways to frame this history.

5. The Last Stand of Theory

1. Hayashida Shigeo, "*Nippon Nyūsu Dai 177*-go Zengo" (Before and after *Nippon News No. 177*), *Film Center* 13 (8 March 1973): 17.
2. Satō Tadao, remarks made during a panel discussion on World War II cinema held at the Hawaii International Film Festival, 7 December 1991.
3. For historical background on this subject, see Patricia Steinhoff, *Tenkō: Ideology and Societal Integration in Prewar Japan* (New York: Garland, 1991); Tsurumi, *Intellectual History of Wartime Japan.*
4. Tsurumi, *Intellectual History of Wartime Japan,* 12.
5. See Pincus, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan*; Barshay, *State and Intellectual in Imperial*

Japan; Miles Fletcher, *The Search for a New Order: Intellectuals and Fascism in Prewar Japan* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

6. Honda Shugo, *Tenkō Bungakuron* (On *tenkō* literature) (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1964), 64, cited in Kazuko Tsurumi, *Social Change and the Individual: Japan before and after Defeat in World War II* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), 38.
7. Japanese film critics interested in the period take similar stances on *tenkō* in that they are both sympathetic and critical. Satō Tadao is critical of filmmakers who underwent *tenkō* while conceding that filmmaking is a collective process, making it difficult to pin responsibility on individual personalities. This collaborative quality makes it difficult to go against the flow when everyone is moving in a single ideological direction. Satō also notes that filmmakers and screenwriters had always been ordered to make films that were commercially viable; political viability cannot be that different. (See also Kyoko Hirano, *Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo: Japanese Cinema under the American Occupation, 1945–1952* [Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993], 33.) Whereas area studies worked through the issue of *tenkō* a generation ago, American film scholars have generally attempted to avoid the subject when addressing the war era. Ironically, this leaves Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie's discussion in *The Japanese Film* as the most direct discussion of *tenkō* offered by American film scholars. Given the intellectual and political atmosphere of the late-1950s context of the original publication of Anderson and Richie's book, their explanation is understandably dated. For Anderson and Richie, *tenkō* represents the Japanese "genius for the volte-face, and for the completely apolitical quality of the Japanese character. That this often approaches intellectual dishonesty no foreign observer of the Japanese can fail to appreciate" (387).
8. Iwasaki Akira, "Senden, Sendo Shudan to Shite no Eiga: 1" (Cinema as a method of propaganda and agitation: 1), *Shinkō Geijitsu* (February 1929): 19–30; Iwasaki Akira, "Senden, Sendo Shudan to Shite no Eiga: 2," *Shinkō Geijitsu* (March 1929): 33–46.
9. Iwasaki, *Nihon Eiga Shishi,* 92.
10. Iwasaki, *Eigaron,* 183–86.
11. Iwasaki Akira, "'Tōsei no 'Kōka': Nachisu no Eiga Seisaku" (The 'effect' of regulation: Nazi film policy), *Nihon Eiga* 2, no. 4 (April 1937): 52–54.
12. Iwasaki Akira, Iida Shinbi, et al., "Nyūsu Eiga e no Chūmon" (Requests toward news films), *Eiga to Gijutsu* 4, no. 5 (November 1936): 315–16.
13. Iwasaki Akira, "Sensō to Eiga" (War and cinema), *Miyako Shinbun,* (7–10 October 1937). This series is quoted extensively in Kazama Michitarō, *Kinema ni Ikiru: Hyōden Iwasaki Akira* (Living in cinema: Critical biography, Iwasaki Akira) (Tokyo: Kage Shobō, 1987), 77–82; and Iwasaki, *Nihon Eiga Shishi,* 114–23.
14. Iwasaki Akira, "Jihen to Nyūsu Eiga" (Incident and news film), *Bungei Shunjū* (October 1938): 124. The mention of the scene involving a puppy appears to be a description of a scene from *Fighting Soldiers.* However, most of the films shot by Miki Shigeru seem to include similar "dog scenes."
15. Quoted in Kazama, *Kinema ni Ikiru,* 95.
16. Iwasaki Akira, *Eiga to Genjitsu* (Film and reality) (Tokyo: Shun'yōdō Shoten, 1939), 30–31.
17. Quoted in Kazama, *Kinema ni Ikiru,* 82.
18. Iwasaki, *Nihon Eiga Shishi,* 238. "Other people" here undoubtedly refers to Tsumura, who rabidly supported the war effort.
19. I am indebted to Tsurumi Shunsuke and Makino Mamoru for mapping out the relationships in this community for me at the early stages of my research. Makino has gone on to publish an essay on the community's journals: Makino Mamoru, "Eiga ni Okeru Kyoto-ha no Seiritsu" (The establishment of cinema's Kyoto group), *Art Research* (March 2001): 31–54. This is a record of a seminar he conducted at Kyoto's Ritsumeikan University in 1999.
20. A bibliography of the entire run of *Yuibutsuron Kenkyū* may be found in Tosaka Jun, *Tosaka Jun Zenshū,* vol. 5 (Tokyo: Keiso Shobō, 1974), 519–49.
21. Tosaka Jun, "Iwayuru 'Jinmin Sensen' no Mondai" (The problem of the so-called Popular Front), in *Tosaka Jun Zenshū,* vol. 5 (Tokyo: Keiso Shobō, 1974), 49.
22. Ōi Tadashi, *Nihon Kindai Shisō no Ronri* (The logic of modern Japanese thought) (Tokyo: Gōdō Shuppansha, 1958), 212.
23. Fuji Shuppan reprinted the entire run of *Eiga Sōzō* in 1986.
24. Makino Mamoru, "Kiroku Eiga no Rironteki Dōkō o Otte 16" (Chasing the theoretical movement of documentary film 16), *Unitsūshin* (3 March 1977).
25. A compendium of "dangerous thought activities" put together by the Education Ministry singles the group out as particularly troublesome: "Shisō Chōsa Shiryō," no. 33 (Education Ministry, Thought Division, internal document, March 1937), 41.
26. Hatakeyama Yoshio, "Henshū Goki" (Editors' afterword), *Eiga Sōzō* 1, no. 1 (May 1936): 100.
27. Tosaka Jun, "Eiga no Shajitsuteki Tokusei to Taishusei" (Cinema's characteristic realism and its popularity), *Eiga Sōzō* 1, no. 1 (May 1936): 11.

28. Tosaka Jun, "Eiga no Ninshikironteki Kachi to Fūzoku Byōsha" (Cinema's epistemological value and its description of customs), *Nippon Eiga* 2, no. 6 (June 1937): 18.
29. Tosaka Jun, "Eiga Geijutsu to Eiga: Abusutorakushon no Sayō E" (Film art and film: Toward the operation of abstraction), *Eiga Sōzō* 3, no. 1 (December 1937): 6–13.
30. Ibid., 8.
31. Ishihara Tatsurō, "Ari no Mama ni Miru to Iu Koto ni Tsuite" (On seeing things just as they are), *Gakugei* (April 1938).
32. Ueno Kōzō, "Geijutsuteki Eiga to Kagakuteki Eiga" (Artistic films and scientific films), *Gakugei* (July 1938): 150–58; Ueno Kōzō, "Eiga Geijutsu no Tame ni 1" (For a film art 1), *Eiga Sōzō* 1, no. 5 (November 1936): 6–17; Ueno Kōzō, "Eiga Riron no Shiteki Sobyo: Eiga Geijutsu no Tame ni 2" (A historical rough sketch of film theory: For a film art 2), *Eiga Sōzō* 2, no. 1 (January 1937): 21–25; Ueno Kōzō, "Geijutsuteki Ninshiki ni Tsuite: Eiga Geijutsu no Tame ni 3" (On artistic cognition: For a film art 3"), *Eiga Sōzō* 3, no. 1 (December 1937): 44–57.
33. Ueno Kōzō, "Geijutsuteki Ninshiki no Taisho: Amakasu-shi ni Kotaenagara" (The object of artistic cognition: While answering Amakasu), *Gakugei* (October 1938): 74.
34. Amakasu Iwayuki, "Geijutsu no Shajitsu ni Tsuite" (On the realism of art), *Gakugei* (1938).
35. Tosaka Jun, "Ueno Kōzō-shi ni Tsuite" (Regarding Mr. Ueno Kōzō), in *Tosaka Jun Zenshū, Bekkan* (Tokyo: Keiso Shobō, 1979): 304–5 (reprinted from *Yuiken Nyūsu* 86 [December 1937]).
36. Tosaka, "Eiga Geijutsu to Eiga," 6–13.
37. Ishihara Tatsurō, "Jijitsu to Kagaku" (Fact and science), *Gakugei* (1938). This debate also comes up in a *Gakugei zadankai:* Tosaka Jun, Ishihara Tatsurō, et al., "Ninshikiron no Gendaiteki Igi" (The modern meaning of epistemology), *Gakugei* (October 1938). Actually, the group published one additional issue secretly, but did not sell it.
38. Ueno Kōzō, "Kogata Eiga Haiken" (A look at small-gauge films), *Eiga Sōzō* 2, no. 2 (March 1937): 36.
39. In later years, Ueno made this assertion in different arenas, arguing, for example, for the dissolution of the long-standing opposition between film as art and film as science. See Ueno Kōzō, "Eiga ni Okeru Geijutsu to Kagaku: Bunka Eigaron no Kisoteki Mondai 1" (Art and science in cinema: The fundamental problem for culture film theory 1), *Nihon Eiga* 5, no. 2 (February 1940): 24–35; Ueno Kōzō, "Eiga ni Okeru Geijutsu to Kagaku: Bunka Eigaron no Kisoteki Mondai 2," *Nihon Eiga* 5, no. 3 (March 1940): 25–35.
40. Honma Yuiʻichi, "Eiga no Ninshiki" (Film cognition), *Gakugei* (October 1938): 78.
41. As I was conceptualizing this chapter, Ueno was very helpful to me with both his time and his writings. See in particular, Ueno Toshiya, *Diasupora no Shikō* (Thinking diaspora) (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1999); and Ueno Toshiya, "The Beginnings of Cinema, the End of Cinema," trans. Maya Todeschini, in *Den'ei Nanahenge* (Seven transformations in the cinema) (Tokyo: Cinematrix, 1995). Leslie Pincus, who is writing a book on Nakai, has also been inspirational as we have worked together to understand the difficult problems raised by Nakai's work. Her published work has focused on Nakai's postwar activism. See Leslie Pincus, "A Salon for the Soul: Nakai and the Culture Movement in Postwar Hiroshima," *ii: The Journal of the International Institute* (University of Michigan), 5, no. 1 (fall 1997): 7–9; and Leslie Pincus, "Nakai Masakazu and the Postwar Hiroshima Culture Movement," *Positions* (forthcoming). Other useful essays include Kuno Osamu, "Bi to Shūdan no Ronri" (Beauty and the Logic of the Group), in *Sanjūnendai no Shisōkatachi* (Intellectuals of the 1930s) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975); Ōtera Shinsuke, "Zushiki Kukan/Setsudan Kukan" (Graphic space/cutting space), *Eigagaku* 7 (1993): 93–116. Also, I have found the following two anthologies of Nakai's writings helpful: Kuno Osamu, ed., *Nakai Masakazu: Bi to Shudan no Ronri* (Nakai Masakazu: Beauty and the logic of the group) (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1962); and Tsujibe Masatarō, ed., *Nakai Masakazu: Ikiteiru Kūkan—Shutaiteki Eiga Geijutsuron* (Nakai Masakazu: Living space—subjective cinema art theory) (Tokyo: Tenbinsha, 1971). Each of these volumes includes the editor's commentary; the latter book emphasizes Nakai's film theory.
42. In fact, few of Nakai's commentators ever look for historical difference in his work, treating postwar efforts as one with his very first essays. Granted, Nakai encouraged this by rewriting and republishing articles, and one of the most easily understood summaries of his thought is actually in a remarkably early publication: "Eiga no Fuan" (The restlessness of cinema) (1930), in *Nakai Masakazu Zenshū II* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1965), 169–78.
43. Tsujibe Masatarō, "Eiga no Michi" (The path of cinema), *Bi-Hihyō* 1, no. 1 (1929): 122. The first experiments with television occurred in the late 1920s.
44. Nakai Masakazu, "Gendai Bigaku no Kiki to Eiga Riron" (Modern aesthetics' crisis and film theory), in *Nakai Masakazu Zenshū III* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1964), 191.
45. Imamura Taihei, "Kaisetsu" (Commentary), in Nakai Masakazu, *Nakai Masakazu Zenshū III* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1964), 323–38.
46. Nakai Masakazu, "Kontinuitii no Ronrisei" (The logic of continuity), in *Nakai Masakazu Zenshū III* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1964), 165.

47. Nakai Masakazu, "'Haru' no Kontinuitii" (The continuity of *Spring*), in *Nakai Masakazu Zenshū III* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1964), 143–51 (reprinted from Bi-Hihyō [March 1931]).
48. Nakai Masakazu, "Shisōteki Kiki ni Okeru Geijutsu Narabi ni Sono Dōkō," in *Nakai Masakazu Zenshū II* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1965), 58.
49. Descriptions of these films may be found in Tsujibe Masatarō, "Atogaki" (Afterword), in *Nakai Masakazu: Ikiteiru Kūkan—Shutaiteki Eiga Geijutsuron*, ed. Tsujibe Masatarō (Tokyo: Tenbinsha, 1971), 213–21; Nakai Masakazu, "Shokusai Eiga no Omoide" (Reminiscence of color films), in *Nakai Masakazu Zenshū III* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1964), 232–35.
50. For a curious look at *Kyoto Sutajio Tsūshin* and *Doyōbi*, see Itō Shunya, *Maboroshi no "Sutajio Tsūshin" E* (For long lost *Kyoto Studio Newsletter*) (Tokyo: Renga Shobōshinsha, 1978).
51. "Henshu Goki" (Editors' afterword), *Doyōbi*, 5 September 1936, 6.
52. I am indebted to Leslie Pincus for introducing me to Nose's son, Kyō.
53. Nose Kyō transferred many of his father's films to video and added sound tracks using the same 78s that had been played along with the films in theaters. He duplicated the music to the best of his memory.
54. Nakai, "'Haru' no Kontinuitii," 151.

6. Kamei Fumio

1. This and other biographical information about Kamei comes from Noda Shinkichi, *Nihon Dokyumentarii Eiga Zenshi* (A complete history of Japanese documentary) (Tokyo: Shakai Shisōsha, 1984), 42–78; Kamei Fumio, *Tatakau Eiga: Dokyumentarisuto no Shōwashi* (Fighting films: A documentarist's Shōwa history) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho, 1989); Tsuzuki Masaaki, *Tori ni Natta Ningen: Hankotsu no Kantoku—Kamei Fumio no Shōgai* (The human who became a bird: The director with a rebellious spirit—the life of Kamei Fumio) (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1992); Kamei Fumio and Tsuchimoto Noriaki, "Dokyumentarii no Seishin" (The documentary spirit), in *Kōza Nihon Eiga 5* (Seminar: Japanese cinema, vol. 5), ed. Imamura Shōhei, Satō Tadao, Shindō Kaneto, Tsurumi Shunsuke, and Yamada Yōji (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1987), 342–61. The script discussed in this chapter is based on Kamei Fumio, *Tatakau heitai/Nihon no higeki (Fighting Soldiers/A Japanese Tragedy)* (Tokyo: Japanese Documentary Filmmakers Association, 1989).
2. "Kamei Fumio Ōi ni Kataru" (Kamei Fumio speaks), *Eiga Hyōron* 17, no. 2 (February 1959): 40.
3. A copy of *Nanking* was discovered in China in 1995, and the film was released on commercial videotape on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II. I stumbled on *Peking* in the U.S. National Archives in 1997; a print has since been repatriated to Japan by the Yamagata Film Library. Unfortunately, its first reel is still missing; there is no mistaking Kamei's brilliant work, however.
4. Akimoto Takeshi, "*Shanghai* kara *Nanking* E" (From *Shanghai* to *Nanking*), *Eiga to Geijutsu* 7, no. 3 (March 1938): 165. The story of the film has now been widely told, and there are several variations, but this is probably its first telling.
5. Satō, *Kinema to Hōsei*, (1985), 174.
6. I stumbled on the film in the U.S. National Archives in 1997 while waiting for some prints to arrive. I was flipping through the "captured records" section of the old card catalog and came across the title *Peking*. Suspecting it might be the lost film, I ordered the print to take a look. The first reel was missing, so there were no credits, but within minutes there was no question who had made it. The National Archives control number for the film is 242 MID 6047. The Yamagata Documentary Film Library has also repatriated the film. It may be viewed in both locations.
7. Kamei Fumio, "Kiroku Eiga to Kōsei" (Documentary and structure), *Eiga Hyōron* (June 1938).
8. Kamei Fumio, Akimoto Takeshi, et al., "Nihon Bunka Eiga no Shoki kara Kyō o Kataru Zadankai" (Roundtable on the Japanese culture film from the early days to today), *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* (February 1940): 24.
9. Kamei and Tsuchimoto, "Dokyumentarii no Seishin," 350, quoted in High, *Teikoku to Ginmaku*, 83.
10. Kamei et al., "Nihon Bunka Eiga no Shoki Kara Kyō o Kataru Zadankai," 20.
11. Shirai, *Kamera to Jinsei*, 70–72.
12. Kamei et al., "Nihon Bunka Eiga no Shoki Kara Kyō o Kataru Zadankai," 24.
13. Miki Shigeru, "Bunka Eiga Enshutsusha e no Tegami" (A letter to culture film directors), *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* (March 1940): 65.
14. Akimoto Takeshi, "Miki Shigeru no Tegami o Tensō Suru" (Forwarding Miki Shigeru's letter), *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* (April 1940): 115–16.
15. Kamei Fumio, "Miki-san no 'Bunka Eiga Enshutsusha e no Tegami' no Igi" (The meaning of Miki's "A letter to culture film directors"), *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* (April 1940): 116–18.
16. Miki Shigeru, "Futatabi Bunka Eiga Enshutsusha e no Tegami" (Another letter to culture film directors), *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* (May 1940): 182–85. See also Murata Hideo, "Bunka Eiga no

Seisaku ni Okeru Kyōdo Sagyō no Mondai" (The problem of collaborative work in culture film production), *Bunka Eiga Kenkyū* (June 1940): 243–47.
17. Miki Shigeru, "*Wuhan sakusen* o Mite" (Watching *The Battle of Wuhan*), *Eiga to Gijutsu* 9, no. 4 (April 1939): 210.
18. Kamei Fumio, "*Tatakau heitai* kara no Keiken" (My experience from *Fighting Soldiers*), *Kinema Junpō* (1 April 1939): 105.
19. Ibid.
20. Incidentally, there is no evidence that Kamei or anyone around him was reading Benjamin.
21. Kamei, "*Tataku heitai* kara no Keiken," 105.
22. Ishizaka Kenji has performed an analysis similar to the one that follows, a close textual analysis that often goes beyond the received understanding of the film's complexity and has inspired my approach here. Ishizaka Kenji, "Inochigake no Aimaisa" (The vagueness of risking one's life), *Image Forum* 90 (December 1987): 66–75.
23. Quoted in Tsuzuki, *Tori ni Natta Ningen,* 100.
24. Ueda et al., "Sensō Kiroku Eiga no Hyōgen ni Tsuite (2)," 6–7.
25. The scenario of the film (from a stage before editing) was published for other filmmakers to study: Kamei Fumio, *"Kobayashi Issa"* (scenario), *Bunka Eiga* 1, no. 1 (January 1941): 66–69.
26. For a fairly detailed discussion of *Issa* as a "haiku" film, see Mizoguchi, "Bunka Eiga Yomoyama Zadankai," 36.
27. He did, however, publish the scenario: Kamei Fumio and Shirai Shigeru, *"Machi to nōson" (Town and Village), Eiga to Ongaku* (December 1940): 76–78.
28. Ōtsuka Kyōichi, "*Fuji no chishitsu,*" *Eiga Junpō* 14 (21 May 1941): 64.
29. Kamei, *Tatakau Eiga,* 93–94.
30. "Kamei Fumio Ōi ni Kataru," 35–36.
31. Advertisement in *Eiga Junpō* 10 (11 April 1941): 66.
32. Quoted in Kamei, *Tatakau Eiga,* 92.
33. Ibid., 104. The *Kojiki* is the book of ancient records that contains the story of the "birth of the nation."
34. See, for example, ibid., 92; Tsuzuki, *Tori ni Natta Ningen,* 127, 343.
35. *"Niwatori" (Chicken), Nippon Eiga* 9, no. 17 (November 1944): 12–13 (in the film, Tokugawa Musei plays a man in the countryside raising chickens); announcement in *Nippon Eiga* 9, no. 10 (July 1943): 19.
36. Saiki Tomonori, *"Seikū" (Security of the Skies), NFC Newsletter* 3, no. 2 (March–April 1997): 6–7. See also Irie Yoshirō, "Mō Hitotsu no Eiga Bunka ni Tsuite" (On another film culture), *NFC Newsletter* 3, no. 2 (March–April 1997): 3–5.
37. Quoted in Yamane Sadao, *"Soldiers at the Front,"* in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 260–61.

7. After Apocalypse

1. Kamei, *Tatakau Eiga,* 106–7.
2. Inoue [Itō] Sueo, *Eiga e no Omoide* (Memories about films) (self-published circa 1993), 82.
3. Yamane Sadao, *"Tragedy of Japan,"* in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 267.
4. Iwasaki, *"Asufaruto no michi,"* 69.
5. Furuno et al., "Nippon Eigasha no Shimei," 25.
6. Kuwano, *Dokyumentarii no Sekai,* 200–201.
7. Hirano, *Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo,* 122–45. The discussion of the production history that follows is based largely on Hirano's research, which included impressive use of archival documents.
8. GHQ/USAFPAC Checksheet from K.C. to R.H.K., 13 June 1946, in "A Japanese Tragedy" file, Box 331–8579, NRC; quoted in ibid., 130.
9. Ibid., 131.
10. Hirano's research suggests that this incident hints at the reverse direction the leaders of the occupation would take several years later.
11. His photographs are collected in Rupert Jenkins, ed., *Nagasaki Journey: The Photographs of Yosuke Yamahata, Aug. 10, 1945* (San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1995).
12. I would like to thank Daniel McGovern, Erik Barnouw, Bill Murphy, and Fukushima Yukio for their help in assembling research materials for this chapter. Videotape and film copies of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* are available for purchase from the U.S. National Archives, Motion Picture, Sound and Video Branch, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740; phone (301) 713-7060. The film is also available for viewing in the National Archives

reference room; reservations should be made well in advance. Copies of the unedited color footage shot by Mimura, McGovern, Dyer, and Susson (342 USAF, reels 11,000–11,079) may also be seen or purchased at the National Archives.

13. The first public film on the attacks was *Nippon News No. 257,* which hit theaters on 22 September 1945. The footage for this newsreel was apparently shot by an unknown cinematographer from the Tokyo office of Nichiei who accompanied an imperial envoy to Hiroshima two weeks after the bombing. Kanō Ryūichi and Mizuno Hajime, *Hiroshima Nijūnen: Genbaku Kiroku Eiga Seisakusha no Shōgen* (Twenty years after Hiroshima: Testimony of the filmmakers of the atomic bomb film) (Tokyo: Kobundō, 1960), 30–31.
14. Kogawa Tetsuo, in Kogawa Tetsuo and Tsurumi Shunsuke, "When the Human Beings Are Gone," trans. Maya Todeschini, in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 167.
15. According to the title of one biography, Miki Shigeru is the "man who shot the *maboroshi* atomic bomb film." The dust jacket of Harry Mimura's biography cries, "I'm the one who shot the *maboroshi* atomic bomb film!!" See Uno Masao, *Maboroshi Genbaku Eiga o Totta Otoko* (The man who shot the phantom atomic bomb film) (Tokyo: Futosha, 1987); and Kudō Miyoko, *Seirin kara Hiroshima E* (From Hollywood to Hiroshima) (Tokyo: Shōbunsha, 1985).
16. Inoue, *Eiga e no Omoide,* 68. Uriu Tadao describes some of the discussions preceding their meeting with Itō; see Uriu Tadao, *Sengo Nihon Eiga Shoshi* (A small history of postwar Japanese film) (Tokyo: Hōsei University Press, 1981), 2–11. He also offers some information about the other cameramen who shot footage in Hiroshima just after the attacks. In English, see Hirano, *Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo.*
17. Inoue, *Eiga e no Omoide,* 69–70.
18. Kanō Ryūichi, "Yōyaku Te ni Shita Maboroshi no Genbaku Eiga" (The atomic bomb film that finally comes into our hands), *Kinema Junpō* (1 January 1968): 72.
19. Aihara Hideji, interview in *Bosshū sareta genbaku firumu* (Confiscated atomic bomb film), TV Tokyo documentary, circa 1989.
20. Quoted in Uno, *Maboroshi Genbaku Eiga o Totta Otoko,* 39–41.
21. Quoted in Erik Barnouw, "Iwasaki and the Occupied Screen," *Film History* 2 (1988): 342.
22. Inoue, *Eiga e no Omoide,* 70–75.
23. Sekiguchi Toshio, interview, in *Bosshū sareta genbaku firumu.*
24. Inoue, *Eiga e no Omoide,* 74.
25. Kanō and Mizuno, *Hiroshima Nijūnen,* 128–30.
26. Averill A. Liebow, *Encounter with Disaster: A Medical Diary of Hiroshima 1945* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970), 194. "Kobayama" probably refers to Okuyama.
27. Aihara, interview in *Bosshū sareta genbaku firumu.*
28. Memorandum photographed in *Bosshū sareta genbaku firumu.* The original is in the possession of Liebow's widow.
29. Kanō and Mizuno, *Hiroshima Nijūnen,* 132.
30. Albert H. Schwichtenberg, memo to G-2 GHQ AFPAC, APO 500, Advance (28 December 1945) (Daniel A. McGovern Collection). Furthermore, the fact that the doctors already possessed rushes of the medical footage suggests that there were ulterior motives at work.
31. Daniel A. McGovern, "Subject: Japanese Motion Picture Film of Hiroshima and Nagasaki," memo to Lt. Col. Woodward, 29 December 1945, 2 (McGovern Collection).
32. Walter A. Buck, memo to Headquarters, U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, APO 181 (attn. Lt. Col. Woodward), 3 January 1946 (McGovern Collection).
33. William I. Castles, "Subject: Documentary Atomic Bombing Film" (attn. Mr. Akira Iwasaki, Manager), memo to Nippon Eigasha, 11 January 1946 (McGovern Collection).
34. Although I am concerned primarily with written documents in this chapter, here I also refer to verbal discourses such as gossip and oral traditions of film lore. "Talkers" are generally less careful than "writers," so the former tend to be considerably more contradictory and oriented toward spectacles, such as the specter of military police seizing the prints. As for written texts, a cursory look at the various discussions cited in the notes for this chapter will quickly uncover differences.
35. This does not rule out other possibilities; for example, Iwasaki misunderstood the somewhat vague wording of the English-language memo, or didn't tell the others until the eleventh hour.
36. Clearly troubled by the stories of forced, or violent, confiscation, McGovern now emphasizes this perspective in the strongest terms, pointing to the original purchase order that engaged Nichie's service. The "Receipt for Supply or Service" amounts to U.S.$20,158.66 and includes lines for hotel charges in Nagasaki for the film crew, train fare, raw film stock, sound recording, title production, insert and map design, music selection, translation, narration, lab, editing overtime, transportation, equipment rental, and 604 still photographs (Procurement No. SC-8T-PD 200-46, 30 March 1946). This budget was derived from a memo signed by Iwasaki that showed a total of

¥314,399 (Iwasaki Akira, "Statement of the Production Cost on 'Effects of the Atomic Bomb,'" n.d.). (Both documents are in the McGovern Collection.)

37. Quoted in "Film of Atomic Bombings Discovered Hidden Away," *Japan Times* (international ed.), 27 December 1993–2 January 1994, 3.
38. Quoted in Tanikawa Yoshio, *Dokyumentarii Eiga no Genten: Sono Shiso to Hoho* (Starting point of documentary film: Ideas and methods) (Tokyo: Futōsha, 1990), 220.
39. Inoue, *Eiga e no Omoide,* 86.
40. Robert Jay Lifton, *Death in Life* (New York: Random House, 1967), 455; Imahori, borrowed by Robert Lifton for the chapter on the film in *Death in Life,* 454.
41. In 1993, *Chūgoku Shinbun* reported that Nichiei Shinsha had plans to release an edited version of the hidden footage on video, which amounted to a little more than three hours of film on twenty-five reels. Some of the footage was not used in the original documentary. "Genbaku Kiroku Firumu: Hi no Me" (Atomic bomb documentary film sees the light of day), *Chūgoku Shinbun,* 21 December 1993, 2.
42. Daniel A. McGovern, interviews and correspondence with the author.
43. Kanō and Mizuno, *Hiroshima Nijūnen,* 140. The second screening featured only ten of the full nineteen reels, probably because McGovern knew the film was too long and tedious for a public audience.
44. Mark Gayn, "Jap Film of Atom Bomb Damage en Route Here," *Chicago Sun* (evening ed.), 13 May 1946, 8. The story was also distributed by the International News Service under the headline "Atomic Bomb Film Epic Enroute to US" but much of this report was incorrect. There is a newspaper clipping from the service, with no bibliographic information, in the McGovern Collection.
45. After the Nichiei film was classified secret, McGovern and Dyer continued to pursue the possibility of creating films from the color footage they shot with Mimura and Susson. In addition to five training films, the project included a feature-length documentary to be produced by Warner Bros. for wide public release. The studio offered to make the documentary "for indoctrination purposes, showing the effects on the economic, cultural, and political life of Japan resulting from strategic air attack by the Army Air Forces" (Orvil Anderson, "Subject: Preparation of Documentary and Training Films for the Army Air Forces," memo to Commanding General, Army Air Forces, 10 July 1946 [McGovern Collection]). The Warner Bros. project eventually fell through, but the footage was momentarily downgraded from "secret" to "confidential" long enough for McGovern to complete five training films: *The Effect of the Atomic Bomb against Hiroshima, The Effect of the Atomic Bomb against Nagasaki, The Medical Aspects of the Atomic Bomb, The Effect of Strategic Air Attack against Japan,* and *The Effect of the Aerial Mining Program* (Gordon H. Austin, "Subject: Classification of United States Strategic Bombing Survey Training Film Project," memo to Commanding General, Air University, Maxwell Field, Alabama, 12 April 1947 [McGovern Collection]).
46. The film and accompanying materials reemerged with the closing of Norton Air Force Base in 1994. As of this writing, they seem to be sitting in boxes at the U.S. National Archives. See note 47, below, for details.
47. A short history of the Nichiei print: Throughout the occupation, the U.S. military enforced a representational silence on the subject of the atomic bombings. The reels hidden by the four Nichiei filmmakers—seven to thirteen reels, depending on which account you read—remained in Miki Shigeru's lab until the end of the occupation in 1952. Iwasaki, Kanō, and Itō then went to retrieve the film, only to find that Toho had beat them to it. After reorganization, Nichiei came under the umbrella of Toho under the new name Nichiei Shinsha, and the studio made its claim for the film. Considering the support the production had received from the Ministry of Education and the USSBS, the studio's claim to the rights is dubious. However, it keeps a firm grip on the film to this day.

 In the 1950s and 1960s, Toho (or Nichiei Shinsha—it is unclear which) limited use of the footage to a handful of films, angering many who suspected both political motives and fear of affecting foreign markets. The first postwar appropriation of the film was a special edition of *Asahi News* (no. 363) released on the anniversary of the end of the war in 1953. Titled *The First Atomic Bombing Sacrifice* (Genbaku gisei dai ichigō), this newsreel called Hiroshima a "city of death" in which "no trees or grass can be found." It was shown to Japanese American audiences in Hawaii, where it came to the attention of the U.S. government. The U.S. embassy asked Nichiei Shinsha for an explanation, but there was nothing the Americans could do, as the occupation was over. The incident apparently ended when the Japanese company offered the United States a print (yet another copy that has disappeared). The response to this newsreel was so strong that Nichiei Shinsha followed it with a two-reel documentary, *Genbaku no Nagasaki* (Atom-bombed Nagasaki), which was shown in Toho theaters (Uno, *Maboroshi Genbaku Eiga o Totta Otoko,* 3).

After this, a number of other films drew images from the Nichiei print: *For Eternal Peace* (Eien no heiwa o), *The Face of War* (Sensō no kao), and the Swedish films *Our Struggle* (Waga tōsō) and *Our Struggle Continued* (Zoku waga tōsō). The most important films to make use of the material were Kamei Fumio's *It's Good to Be Alive* (Ikite ite yokatta) and Alain Resnais's *Hiroshima Mon Amour*. Consciousness of the Nichiei film grew, even among the general public, and there were increasing calls to repatriate the film. Apparently, the Japanese government repeatedly asked the United States for the film, and the requests were repeatedly turned down (see Greg Mitchell, "Japanese Film Suppressed," *Nuclear Times,* March 1983, 12). When the McGovern print surfaced in 1967, the incomplete, silent Nichiei print was no longer as precious as before. Plans were announced for the release of the footage, either on video or in a newly edited documentary, but it is unclear if this ever happened.

However, Toho continues to claim a legal right to the film, even though the U.S. government considers it to be in the public domain and makes the film freely available for purchase through the U.S. National Archives. Even so, when Fukushima Yukio and I screened the complete film at the 1991 Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, we had to clear permission with Toho despite the fact that we were using the Peace Museum's print (purchased from the U.S. National Archives). Luckily, film- and videomakers outside of Japan are unaware of this problem and consider the film public domain.

A short history of the McGovern print: After the classification of the film, McGovern took all the footage, both black-and-white and color, to Wright Field in Ohio. There he cataloged everything and made four or five training films from the color footage. He struck the 16mm copy just before he moved on to other work within the military. Although making the copy could have brought him trouble, he felt it necessary to ensure that future generations would have the film even if the original materials (designated USAF 17679) disappeared. The accession date for this hidden print is unclear. Records in the U.S. National Archives suggest it was declassified in the 1950s, but a BBC report claimed the print was moved in 1960 (Kudō, *Seirin kara Hiroshima E,* 209).

In any case, the U.S. government refused to release the film for political reasons. The *Miami Herald* cited unnamed sources in reporting that the United States would not release the film for fear of damaging U.S. relations with Japan ("U.S. Won't Let Film of Hiroshima A-Bomb Horror Be Shown," *Miami Herald,* 18 May 1967, 11-A). It even published an editorial calling for the release of the film to inject some seriousness into the arms talks in the midst of a Middle East crisis ("Let World See Hiroshima," *Miami Herald,* 25 May 1967, A6). Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Herbert Sussan, one of the American supervisors working under McGovern, pushed hard for the release of both the finished film and the unedited color footage. As a network television journalist, he had powerful connections, including politicians and journalists such as Edward R. Murrow. Sussan even went so far as to ask Harry Truman for access while shooting a documentary on the president. However, none of the people he approached could (or desired to) do anything. Sussan had also contacted McGovern for help, but McGovern was busy with his own career within the military, and perhaps afraid of retribution, considering his position. Sussan's unflagging and frustrating efforts to have the film released from its suppression are detailed in Susan Jaffe, "Why the Bomb Didn't Hit Home," *Nuclear Times,* March 1983, 10–15; see also Mitchell, "Japanese Film Suppressed"; Greg Mitchell, "Herbert Sussan," *Nuclear Times,* November/December 1985, 2. In any case, a 16mm reduction print, *and a 35mm print and magnetic sound track,* ended up in the National Archives. However, like most of the archives' holdings, nothing "exists" until someone asks for it.

The film emerged from its suppression in 1967, when a 16mm print was returned to the Japanese Ministry of Education by the American government (for news reports of the time, see Michael J. Leahy, "N.E.T. to Show Japanese Film of Atom Bomb Damage," *New York Times,* 1 August 1970, 47; "Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August '45—Not for Sensitive U.S. Eyes," *Boston Globe,* 5 April 1970, B6). At this point, it was a matter between governments. The Ministry of Education initially set up screenings for the filmmakers (see Kanō, "Yōyaku Te ni Shita Maboroshi no Genbaku Eiga," 74) and various officials, but the Japanese government censored the film. In addition to changing its title, the censors removed the government's own credit and cut all scenes showing the effects of the bombs on humans. They claimed to have cut these scenes in deference to the victims, but they did not reinsert the footage when *hibakusha* themselves made an issue of it. The Ministry of Education allowed the censored version to be shown on NHK Education channel on 20 April 1968. The censorship was roundly criticized by writers and survivors, some in the strongest of terms. Hayama Eisaku wrote, "Even twenty-three years after the war, parties affiliated with the Ministry of Education and the Japanese government add to the criminal deed of the American government and those concerned with it who stole and kept the film, making it a double robbery." Hayama Eisaku, "Ningen Fuzai no 'Genbaku Eiga'" (The 'atomic bomb film' absent of human beings), *Kinema Junpō* (15 May 1968): 122. Furthermore, the Min-

istry of Education severely limited access to the film, stating, "in order to avoid the film being utilized for political purposes, applications for loan of the film from labor unions and political organizations will be turned down." *Asahi Evening News,* quoted in Erik Barnouw, "The Hiroshima-Nagasaki Footage: A Report," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 2, no. 1 (1982): 92. Today, this print is held by the Nishina Memorial Foundation; together, the foundation and the Japanese government conspire to keep the print from public view by restricting its use to "scientific researchers." When Fukushima and I were working on the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival in 1991, we asked to see it, and our request was summarily denied.

When documentary film scholar Erik Barnouw heard of the controversy in Japan over the Ministry of Education's censorship, he decided to search for this *maboroshi* film. Expecting trouble, he went straight to the top and wrote to U.S. Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford (letter dated 8 March 1968). He received an immediate and surprising reply from Deputy Assistant Secretary Daniel Henkin: the film was in the National Archives and available to anyone who asked (letter dated 19 March 1968; copies of this correspondence and other related materials are held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the U.S. Library of Congress, the Imperial War Museum in London, and the Barnouw Papers in Columbia University Library's Special Collections). Barnouw bought the print and, with documentarist Paul Ronder, made *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945* (1970), probably the finest documentary to use the Nichiei footage. In "The Hiroshima-Nagasaki Footage," Barnouw describes the enormous impact of this film in Japan, for it concentrated on the images that the Ministry of Education had censored. At the same time, it must be pointed out that despite the high quality of Barnouw and Ronder's film, it was turned down for broadcast by all the major U.S. networks. Eventually, it was shown on the public television, but at least one PBS member station apparently censored the images of the bombs' effects on humans.

As for the original, classified materials, they were assigned control number USN MN 9151 and shipped to the military's archive at Norton Air Force Base. With the post–Cold War cuts in the defense budget, Norton was closed in 1994, and when the archives were moved to March Air Force Base, many film prints were transferred to the National Archives. Among these wooden boxes now sitting in Washington is USN MN 9151. According to shipping records, the materials carrying this control number include a 16mm reduction print and a 35mm duplicate negative with magnetic sound track (I would like to thank Bill Murphy of the National Archives for sifting through the shipping records for this information). As of this writing, the boxes are simply waiting to be opened and the contents cataloged. Which print is the earliest generation will not be determined until the codes on the film stock are investigated.

48. Kogawa and Tsurumi, "When the Human Beings Are Gone," 167.
49. Ibid., 177–78. Actually, according to Itō, he and his staff selected the music, using whatever classical records they could drum up. The Christian connotations of the music were lost on them, and the choice of classical music was simply standard operating procedure. European classical music was the standard for propaganda films, although the irony was not lost on producers. For example, writers for *Nippon Eiga* worried that Western music would compromise news films' Japaneseness, but could not imagine any alternative. "Jiji Eiga no Ongaku ni Tsuite" (On current events films' music), *Nippon Eiga* 9, no. 10 (July 1943): 15–17.
50. Kogawa and Tsurumi, "When the Human Beings Are Gone," 174.
51. Noda Shinkichi, "Itō Sueo-ron Nōto" (Notes on Itō Sueo), *Kiroku Eiga* 5, no. 10 (November 1962): 23.
52. "'Maboroshi' no Eiga Fukugen, Jōei E" (Toward restoration and screening of *"maboroshi"* movie), *Zenkoku Fujin Shinbun,* 10 October 1994, 4.
53. Kudō, *Seirin kara Hiroshima E,* 15.
54. Tanikawa, *Dokyumentarii Eiga no Genten,* 221.
55. Robert Jay Lifton, *Hiroshima in America: Fifty Years of Denial* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1995), 57.
56. Monica Braw, *The Atomic Bomb Suppressed: American Censorship in Occupied Japan* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1991), 5; see also Gar Alperovitz, *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb and the Architecture of an American Myth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 610–11.
57. See, for example, Uno, *Maboroshi Genbaku Eiga o Totta Otoko,* 42–43.
58. This information comes from conversations and interviews with both filmmakers by Fukushima Yukio and myself, which took place as we arranged a screening of the film for the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival in 1991.
59. Quoted in Fukushima Yukio, "Hensha Atogaki" (Editor's afterword), in *Nichibei Eigasen/Media Wars,* ed. Fukushima Yukio and Markus Nornes (Tokyo: Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, 1991), 175.
60. Noda,"Itō Sueo-ron Nōto," 20–24.

61. Quoted in Nagai Hideaki, *10 Fiito Eiga Sekai o Mawaru* (10 feet film around the world) (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1983), 39.
62. See Nichols, "The Voice of Documentary"; Nichols, *Representing Reality,* 128–33.
63. Kogawa and Tsurumi, "When the Human Beings Are Gone," 172–73.
64. See Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception,* trans. Patrick Camiller (New York: Verso, 1989); Ueno, "The Other and the Machine"; Abé Mark Nornes, "Jap Zero," in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 244–45.
65. Nibuya Takashi, "Cinema/Nihilism/Freedom," trans. Hamaguchi Kōichi and Abé Mark Nornes, in *The Japan/America Film Wars: World War II Propaganda and Its Cultural Contexts,* ed. Abé Mark Nornes and Fukushima Yukio (New York: Harwood, 1994), 128.
66. Kogawa and Tsurumi, "When the Human Beings Are Gone," 171.
67. This information comes from interviews and conversations between Itō and Fukushima Yukio that took place during the period when Fukushima and I were researching the film's history for the Yamagata Film Festival.
68. All screen violence trades on this quality of the apparatus, but shrouds it in discursive conventions, routing viewers to the occasional, uncanny glimpse of this stunning indifference. Although such violence is disturbing, it also contains the charms of the epicenter. The enjoyable irony of Stanley Kubrick's subtitle for *Dr. Strangelove—How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*—works because we understand this. Most recently, the point of view of the bomb, which the Nichiei filmmakers allowed to define the terms of their photography and editing, has been literalized through video cameras mounted in the noses of cruise missiles. During the Gulf War, as each bomb reached the city of Baghdad in its "surgical" attack, it recorded its arrival at the epicenter with grainy, silent, absolutely indifferent images. The world watched, transfixed and in awe while experiencing the point of view of the bomb. This fascination quickly wears off as the images are absorbed into human discourse; the voice of the bomb becomes veiled, both containing and increasing its potential power.
69. *Atomic Bomb: The Disastrous Damage of Hiroshima—Nippon News No. 257* (Genshibakudan: Hiroshimashi no sangai—*Nippon Nyūsu #257*). This newsreel was the subject of some controversy in 1994, when a reporter from *Asahi Shinbun* found some memos about it in the U.S. National Archives and wrote about them in an article titled "GHQ, Genbaku Eizō no Jōeichūshi Kentō: Ken'etsu e no Hanpatsu Osore Fumon Ni" (Investigating GHQ's order to halt screenings of the atomic bomb images: Overlooking the fear of a reaction against censorship). The article describes an exchange between David Conde, the occupation official who controlled the Japanese film industry, and censor C. B. Reese. This was the period in which the censorship system was "under construction" and had yet to be implemented. Conde had apparently seen the newsreel before he had the power to censor it. When he later saw the film in a theater, some sections had been cut, and he wondered who was responsible. He also recommended changes and a different title; however, the Americans ultimately decided against censorship for fear of controversy. The newspaper describes the story in the vaguest of terms, and the fact that Kyoko Hirano's reading of the same memos includes nothing about some anonymous censorship suggests the *Asahi* report was somewhat sensationalized (*Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo,* 59–60).
70. "Reaction of Humans to Atom Bomb in Film," *New York Times,* 1946 (full date unknown),18.
71. For details, see note 47, above.
72. They called the movement Genbaku Kiroku Eiga 10 Fiito Undō (Atomic Bomb Documentary Film 10 Feet Movement). Calculating that three thousand yen could buy ten feet of the total eighty-five thousand feet of film, they solicited donations around Japan and raised 1.8 billion yen in the first couple of years. With this they bought all of the color and black-and-white film and made their own *genbaku eiga* with Hani Susumu and other filmmakers. In 1994, they reinvigorated the movement to make a Japanese-language version of *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.* The history of the movement is reported in Nagai, *10 Fiito Eiga Sekai o Mawaru.*
73. There were four broadcasts in 1982.
74. Quoted in Nagai, *10 Fiito Eiga Sekai o Mawaru,* 42. Taniguchi appears in two shots, the first showing a doctor pointing at various part of his back with a large tweezers, the second showing just his face staring off into space. This with the following matter-of-fact narration: "It was midsummer when the atomic bomb hit the heart of Hiroshima and the people were thinly clad. Many parts of their body were exposed. In fact, quite a large number were seminude. First-aid stations reported that 80 to 90 percent of the cases handled by them immediately after the bombing were burns. Burns resulting directly from the atomic bomb were caused on the parts of the body that faced the rays. There were no burns on the opposite side."
75. Quoted in ibid., 62.

Conclusion

1. Half a century after the end of World War II, the commemorations began. First came the spectacle of thousands of invading veterans, politicians, and journalists on the shores of Normandy; even local television stations from all over the United States sent their own reporters for live coverage of the D-Day commemoration. Their reportage emphasized the heroism and valor of the American troops in their confrontation with the evil Nazis. In the face of this moral certitude, one had to wonder how the end of the Pacific War would be "celebrated," considering its atomic conclusion. A preview came with rumblings of outrage over a commemorative U.S. postage stamp featuring a mushroom cloud and the legend "Atomic Bomb Saved Lives." Historians and the Japanese government lodged formal complaints; certainly most Americans wondered what the problem was. The controversies culminated in the censorship of two planned Smithsonian exhibitions: the National Air and Space Museum's display of the *Enola Gay* fuselage and the National Museum of American History's exhibition of veteran Joe O'Donnell's photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Although there was considerable uncertainty over the justification for dropping atomic weapons on human beings in the immediate postwar period, several decades of revision by the key players—from former secretary of war Henry L. Stimson to President Truman—helped winnow out the complexity of the decision to use atomic weaponry and left a simple equation: bomb = life. This conception of the bomb took hold of the American imagination, such that a proposal to present other factors in the *Enola Gay* exhibition resulted in angry speeches in the Senate and the purging of the museum's director. The "Savior Bomb" now functions as sacrifice violence in ways very close to what Kinder *(Blood Cinema)* has described for Spain and I have argued for Japan. The final atrocity of the war, the strategic bombing attacks on civilians, has been elided by the iconic spectacle of the mushroom cloud. In the public discursive field of postwar America, the *cities* of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have become sacrificial scapegoats protecting the fabric of society. Exposure of the massacre violence obscured by that mushroom cloud became a focal point for a spectrum of oppositional positions held by everyone from academic historians to antinuclear activists.
2. Kitaura Kaoru, "*Nippon Nyūsu* ni Yosete" (Approaching *Nippon News*), *Nichiei Geppō* (Nichiei monthly report) 10 (15 December 1947): n.p. (Makino Collection).

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